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SKETCHES OF LIBERIA:  
COMPRISING  
A BRIEF ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, PRODUCTIONS,  
AND DISEASES,  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.

SECOND EDITION—REVISED.

TO WHICH IS ADDED A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF LIBERIA, AND A  
SUCCINCT ACCOUNT OF THE CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS OF  
THE CONTIGUOUS NATIVE TRIBES.

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BY J. W. LUGENBEEL,  
Late Colonial Physician and U. S. Agent in Liberia.  
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WASHINGTON:  
C. ALEXANDER, PRINTER,  
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## P R E F A C E .

A decided conviction of the necessity of a work in which the earnest inquirer may find the principal topics of information that he may desire, respecting the Republic of Liberia, is the motive which has induced the author of these sketches to consent to their publication. His long residence in Liberia, and the great care with which he endeavored to make observations, and to acquire information from the most authentic sources, embolden him to believe that these Sketches, presented as they are with the utmost ingenuousness, are worthy the candid consideration of all who desire a knowledge of the truth, respecting the condition and prospects of the little African Republic. Though they may possibly contain some slight inaccuracies, yet the author believes that a more truthful, comprehensive, and impartial account of matters and things as they really exist in Liberia, has not been given to the public. And with no other motive in view than a desire to impart needful and correct information, he leaves this little work to

the candid persual of the unbiassed reader, in the hope that some good may result from this part of his labors in the cause of humanity.

WASHINGTON, 1850.

### *Preface to the Second Edition.*

The first edition of these Sketches having met with general approbation, and the necessity for an additional supply seeming to exist, the author has carefully revised the work—omitting some unimportant portions, for the sake of brevity, and making such corrections and additions as he deemed necessary.

The presentation of a simple and concise account of *Liberia, as it is*, for the information of all earnest inquirers, and no consideration of pecuniary advantage, has prompted the Author to the publication of these Sketches. Copies of the work will, therefore, as heretofore, be furnished gratuitously on application to the Secretary of the American Colonization Society in this city.

WASHINGTON, June, 1853.

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## CHAPTER I.

### G E O G R A P H Y .

That portion of the western coast of Africa, which has received the appellation of Liberia embraces a tract of country included between the parallels of 4° 23' and 7° 29' north latitude, extending from the Sherbro river on the north (near the southern boundary of the British Colony of Sierra Leone) to the Pedro river on

the south; a distance along the coast of about six hundred miles. The political jurisdiction of the Republic of Liberia embraces about five hundred miles of this territory: that of the Colony of "Maryland in Liberia" embraces about one hundred miles, to the north and east of Cape Palmas. All the territory which lies between

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 Appearance of the Country—Water—Soil.
 

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These two points (except two or three small tracts,) has been purchased from the original proprietors and rightful owners of the soil. The first tract was purchased in the early part of 1822, embracing a small extent of territory in the vicinity of Cape Mesurado. Other portions have, at different times, been purchased—the greater part within the last few years. The interior boundaries of the purchased tracts extend from about ten to forty miles from the coast. These boundaries may readily be extended as far as may be desirable, as the interior tribes are generally very willing, and some of them anxious to sell their territories.

In no instance have the natives, from whom the land was purchased, been required to remove their residences, or to abandon their usual customs, except that of trading in slaves, and the practice of such superstitious rites or ceremonies as tend to deprive any of their fellows beings of life. And, in all the written contracts which have been entered into between the Agents of the Colonization Society, or the authorities of the Republic, and the native chiefs, the latter have invariably obligated themselves, in behalf of the people over whom they presided, to conform to the laws and regulations of the Liberian Government.

As in most other countries, similarly situated, the land in the immediate vicinity of the ocean in Liberia, is generally low; and, in some places, it is very marshy. There are some elevated spots, however; such as those on which the towns of Monrovia and Harper are located. The land generally becomes more elevated towards the interior; and, in some places, within fifty miles of the coast, it is quite mountainous.

Far as the eye can reach from the highest points of land in the vicinity of the ocean, the whole country presents the ap-

pearance of a deep, unbroken forest, with hill-top rising above hill-top towards the vast interior; the country consisting, not as is supposed by some persons, of and plains and burning sands, but of hills and valleys, covered with the verdure of perpetual spring. The country is well watered:—many beautiful streams may be seen winding their way amidst blooming flowers and wild shrubbery; and many cooling springs of clear, sparkling water, invite the weary traveler to linger and quench his thirst. In all the settlements in Liberia, good water can be procured without much difficulty; and though in the dry season, as in this country after a long dry spell in summer, some of the springs fail, for a time; yet, as good water can always be obtained by digging wells; and as many of the springs never fail, there need not be any fear about getting plenty of good water at any time in the year.

**Soil.** The soil of Liberia, like that of other countries, varies in appearance, quality, and productiveness. That of the uplands, though generally much inferior to that of the lowlands, is better adapted to some articles. The upland soil usually consists of a reddish clay, more or less mixed with soft rocks and stones, containing considerable quantities of iron. That of the lowlands, in the immediate vicinity of the ocean, consists principally of sand. Besides this sandy soil, there are two other varieties of lowland soil; one of which is that on the banks of the rivers, within a few miles of the sea: this consists of a loose, deep, black mould; which is peculiarly adapted to the growth of those kinds of vegetables that thrive best during the dry season. The other variety is that which is generally found extending back from the banks of the rivers, farther from the sea than the last named: this consists of a light colored clay, more or less tempered

Rivers—St. Paul's—St. John's and Junk.

with sand; and it is well adapted to almost every kind of vegetables that will thrive in tropical climates.

**Rivers.** There are no very large rivers in Liberia; and, although some of them are from one-fourth to three-fourths of a mile wide, for fifty miles or more from their entrance into the ocean; yet none of them are navigable to a greater distance than twenty miles; the navigation being obstructed by rapids. The St. Paul's, the St. John's, and the Junk, are the largest; and, indeed, they are the only rivers of any considerable length or width. The other principal rivers are the Gallinas, the Cape Mount, the Mechlin, the New Cess, the Grand Cess, the Sanguin, the Sinou, and the Grand Sisters. Some of these present a bold appearance at their mouths; but they are all comparatively short; and none of them are navigable for boats, or even for canoes, more than twenty or thirty miles, without obstruction by rocks or rapids.

The *St. Paul's* river is a beautiful stream of water. It is three-fourths of a mile wide at the widest part, (at Caldwell,) and about three-eighths of a mile wide at Millsburg, about fourteen miles from its mouth.

The banks of this river rise from ten to twenty feet above the water; and, except in places that have been cleared, they are covered with large forest trees; among which may be seen the graceful palm, rearing aloft its green-tufted head, and standing in all its pride and beauty, the ornament and the glory of its native land. The St. Paul's is perhaps the longest river in Liberia. It is studded with many beautiful islands, abounding in camwood, palm, and many other valuable forest trees; and its banks furnish many beautiful sites for residences. Many native hamlets may be seen on the banks of this lovely river—the homes of the untutored chil-

dren of the forest—the benighted sons and daughters of Africa. The St Paul's bifurcates about three miles from its mouth: the principal stream rolls on towards the ocean, while the other fork flows in a south-easterly direction, almost parallel with the beach, and unites with the little Mesurado river near its mouth; and thus an island is formed, about eight miles long and from one to two in width, called Bushrod Island. This latter fork of the river is called *Stockton Creek*, in honor of Com. Stockton, who kindly aided in effecting the first purchase of territory.

The *St. John's* river is also a beautiful stream. It is about sixty miles south-east of the St. Paul's; and it flows through that part of Liberia known as the Grand Bassa country. At the widest point, it is nearly or quite a mile wide. Its length, however, is supposed to be less than that of the St Paul's. The St John's is also studded with numerous islands; the largest of which is Factory Island, about three miles from its mouth. The banks of this river also rise considerably above the water; and the land bordering on it is also very productive.

The *Junk* river, which is about equidistant from the other two named rivers, is the third in size and importance. The main branch is supposed to be equal in length to the St. John's. The northern branch, which is only about forty miles long, is noted as a thoroughfare between Monrovia and Marshall. At the place of embarkation, a few miles below its source, it is not more than five yards wide; but it gradually expands to the width of more than half a mile.

The appearance of the country along the banks of these rivers, and of the numerous little islands which they form, is highly picturesque.

The banks of the St. Paul's and the St. John's, in many places, present encourag-

## Settlements—Monrovia.

the scenes of agricultural industry; showing the handiwork of a people, whose social condition is vastly superior to that of their aboriginal neighbors; and who are thus placed before the indolent and improvident natives, illustrations of the great superiority of the habits of civilized people to their own degrading customs; examples which must eventually exert a powerful influence on the minds and practice of the contiguous native tribes.

And thus, while the mind of the traveler is oppressed by the melancholy consideration of the moral and intellectual darkness of the scattered tribes of human beings, whose desolate-looking hamlets frequently meet his view, as he winds his way amidst the dense forests of the uncultivated hills and dells of Africa; he is encouraged to believe that the time will come when this extensive "wilderness shall be made glad" by the labors of industrious agriculturists, and when this vast desert of ignorance and moral degradation shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

SETTLEMENTS.—The principal settlements in the Republic of Liberia are—Monrovia, New Georgia, Caldwell, Virginia, Kentucky, Millsburg, Marshall, Ellina, Buchanan, Bexley, Greenville, Roadville, Lexington, and Louisiana.—Besides these, there are a few other localities, which are sometimes called by one name and sometimes by another.

*Monrovia* is the largest and oldest of all the settlements; and it is the metropolis, and the seat of government of the Republic. It is located near the mouth of the Mesurado river, a small stream about fifteen miles long, about four miles southeast of the entrance of the St. Paul's river into the ocean, on an elevated site, immediately in the rear of Cape Mesurado, in latitude 6° 19' north. The highest part of the hill on which the town stands, and which is near its centre, is about eighty

feet above the level of the ocean, and about three-fourths of a mile from the summit of the Cape, which is about two hundred and fifty feet above the sea. Cape Mesurado is a bold promontory, covered with massive forest trees and dense undergrowth; except in places that have been cleared. On the summit of the Cape is a light-house and a fort; and along the sloping declivity, towards the town, there are several cleared lots, on which small houses have been erected; in some places affording very pleasant places of residence. The greater part of the promontory, however, is very rocky. The course of the coast north of the Cape, forms a kind of bay, which generally affords safe anchorage for vessels; and the cove, near the base of the Cape, affords as good a landing on the beach as can be found on almost any other part of the coast.

The town of Monrovia, although more compact than any of the other settlements in Liberia, occupies a considerable extent of ground; being about three-fourths of a mile in length. It is laid off with as much regularity as the location will allow; and the streets, of which there are about fifteen in number, have received regular names. The town is divided into lots of one-fourth of an acre, and most of the dwelling-houses have a lot attached to each of them. Most of the lots, and several of the streets, are adorned with various tropical fruit trees; and some of the gardens present a handsome appearance. The houses are generally one story or a story and a half high; some are two full stories. Many of them are substantially built of stone or brick; and some of the best houses are built partly of both these materials. The state house is a large stone building, which was erected in 1843. In the rear of this building, is a substantial stone prison. There are three commodious stone houses

New Georgia—Caldwell—Virginia—Kentucky and Millsburg.

for public worship in the town—Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian; nearly all of the professing christians in the place being attached to one of these religious denominations.

At the base of the hill on which stand the principal dwelling houses, there are several large stone buildings, which are occupied as stores and warehouses. The dwellings of many of the citizens of Monrovia are not only comfortably, but elegantly, and some of them richly furnished; and some of the residents of this little bustling metropolis live in a style of ease and affluence, which does not comport with the contracted views of those persons who regard a residence in Africa as necessarily associated with the almost entire privation of the good things of this life. The population is about fifteen hundred, exclusive of native children and youths who reside in the families of the citizens.

*New Georgia* is a small township, located on the eastern side of Stockton Creek, about five miles from Monrovia. It is occupied principally by native Africans, who were formerly slaves. Upwards of two hundred of the liberated Africans who have been, or who now are, residents of New Georgia, were sent to Liberia by the United States Government, at different times. Many of these have married persons who were born in the United States; and have thereby become more strongly identified with the Liberians, as citizens of the Republic. Some of them are partially educated; and, a few years ago, one of them occupied a seat in the Legislature. As most of the citizens of New Georgia have taken the oath of allegiance, they are permitted to enjoy equal immunities with other citizens.

*Caldwell* is situated on the southern side of the St. Paul's river. The whole settle-

ment, which is divided for convenience into Upper and Lower Caldwell, is about six miles in length, extending along the bank of the river; the nearest part to Monrovia being about nine miles distant. The houses are from one hundred yards to a quarter of a mile, or more, apart; and, of course, this settlement has not much the appearance of a town. Some of the most enterprising farmers in Liberia reside at this place. The land about Caldwell is generally remarkably productive.

*Virginia*, or New Virginia, as it is sometimes called, is a new settlement, commenced in the early part of 1846. It is also on the St. Paul's river, opposite Caldwell. This is the site of the United States Receptacle for liberated Africans, erected in 1847.

*Kentucky* is an agricultural settlement between Virginia and Millsburg, on the northern bank of the St. Paul's river, commenced a few years ago.

*Millsburg* is the farthest settlement from the sea-coast of any in Liberia. It is situated on the northern bank of the St Paul's river, about fourteen miles from its mouth and about twenty miles from Monrovia. Like the other farming settlements, the houses generally are separated at a considerable distance from one another; so that the whole township extends about a mile and a half along the bank of the river. Millsburg is perhaps the most beautiful, and one of the most healthy locations in Liberia. The land is remarkably good, and of easy cultivation. A flourishing Female Academy is in operation at this place, under the care of Mrs. Wilkins, missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And, on the opposite side of the river is White Plains, a mission station of the same Church.

Besides these settlements, there are numerous other points along the St. Paul's river, which are occupied by farmers; so

On the banks of this beautiful stream present, in many places, the appearance of agricultural industry and comfort.

*Marshall* is situated at the mouth of the Sinou river, about thirty-five miles south of Monrovia. Most of the houses in this place are built along the sea-shore. This place is particularly noted for the manufacture of lime: which is obtained altogether from oyster and other shells. Most of the lime that is used in Liberia is made in the vicinity of Marshall. The river at this place abounds in oysters. And though they are not quite equal to those procured in the waters of the United States, yet they are quite palatable, when properly served up.

*Edina* is located on the northern bank of the St. John's river, about half a mile from its mouth. It is handsomely situated: and, in reference to the healthiness of the climate, it is perhaps equal to most others in Liberia. Some of the citizens of Edina are engaged in the cultivation of exportable articles of produce.

*Buchanan* is located at the junction of the Buchanan river (a small stream) with the St. John's, nearly opposite Edina. Several of the citizens of this place also have given considerable attention to the cultivation of coffee, arrow-root, and ginger, during the last few years. A steam saw-mill introduced in 1851, is in successful operation at this place.

A new settlement has recently been formed on the site of the one destroyed by Grant's late chief, and his allies, in November, 1851, near Fish Town, a native village, about three miles below the mouth of the St. John's river.

*Bexley* is situated on the northern side of the St. John's river, about six miles from Buchanan. This place, like the settlements on the St. Paul's river, occupies a considerable extent of territory. It is divided into Upper and Lower Bexley: both to-

gether extending about four miles along the river. Bexley is a fine farming settlement; the land is excellent; and the location is comparatively healthy. Several of the citizens of this place are pretty actively engaged in cultivating articles for exportation. This is certainly one of the most interesting settlements in Liberia. The mission of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions is located at this place; also the head-quarters of the Southern Baptist Mission.

*Greenville* is situated at the mouth of the Sinou river, about one hundred and thirty miles by sea southeast of Monrovia. Like the settlement of Marshall, most of the houses are located along the sea-shore. Greenville presents a handsome appearance from the anchorage. It is one of the most healthy settlements in Liberia. The land in the immediate vicinity of Greenville, and indeed of all the other settlements near the sea-shore, is much inferior to that on the banks of the rivers several miles from their entrance into the ocean. Consequently, those persons who expect to live by "the sweat of their brow," in the cultivation of the soil, will find it greatly to their advantage to locate beyond the sound of the breaking surf of the ocean. A steam saw-mill is in operation at this settlement—the first one introduced into Liberia.

*Readsville, Lexington, and Louisiana*, are farming settlements on or near the Sinou river, from two to five miles above Greenville.

In every settlement, there is one place, or more, of public worship, in which religious services are regularly held. And, in nearly every settlement, there is one regular day and Sunday school, or more. The principal deficiency in the system of education in Liberia, consists in the inability to procure the services of a sufficient



Maryland in Liberia—Climate and seasons—rainy and dry seasons.

number of competent teachers. There are several very good schools at Monrovia, and some of the other settlements; but the facilities for thorough intellectual training are not commensurate with the wants of the people in all the settlements.

As the census has not been taken for several years, I cannot give the exact population of the different settlements, and the exact aggregate population of the Republic. The whole number of inhabitants of the Republic, exclusive of the natives, is probably at present, about seven thousand. The native population is probably about two hundred thousand; many of whom have adopted habits of civilized life; and many of the youth of both sexes have enjoyed, or are enjoying, advantages of education.

MARYLAND IN LIBERIA.

The Colony of "Maryland in Liberia," which has always maintained a distinctive character, and which has always been under a different government from the Republic of Liberia, was established in the early part of the year 1834. Ever since that period, it has continued to progress in interest and importance; and, at present, it occupies a prominent position, as an asylum for the proscribed descendants of Ham; to whom the siren song of "My native

land" loses its mellowing cadence in the thrilling, patriotic sound of "Sweet land of liberty."

This interesting Colony is located about two hundred and fifty miles by sea south-east from Monrovia. *Harper*, the principal town or settlement, is situated near the point of the Cape, (Cape Palmas, a bold projecting promontory, which is one of the most prominent points or land-marks on the western coast of Africa;) and, from the anchorage, it presents a handsome appearance. At the distance of about half a mile from Harper is the town of *East Harper*; in which are several beautiful sites for residences, commanding a fine view of the ocean, and of the adjacent hills and vales. Between these two villages, there are two large native towns, comprising several hundred houses, which present a marked contrast with the comfortable-looking dwellings of the colonists. At the distance of about two and a half miles beyond East Harper is another settlement, called *Tubmantown*. Most of the land near the road between these two villages is occupied by the colonists; so that on both sides of this highway, many neat little cottages may be seen, and many handsome gardens and small farms.

The whole population of Maryland in Liberia, exclusive of aborigines, is about 1,000.

CHAPTER II.

CLIMATE AND SEASONS.

The territory of Liberia being within a few degrees of the equator, of course the nature of the climate is essentially different from that of the United States, the vicissitudes of spring, summer, autumn, and winter not being experienced in the equatorial regions of the earth; there being continued summer weather throughout the year; in-

terrupted only by occasional slight variations in the thermometrical state of the atmosphere; caused by the greater strength of the ordinary breezes, and by clouds and rain; which latter prevail so much more during one half of the year than during the other half, as to give rise to the usually recognized division of the year into two seasons—the *wet* or *rainy season*, and the

## January—harmattan wind.

*dry season*; or, in common parlance, “the rains” and “the dries;” the former of which answers nearly to summer and autumn, and the latter to winter and spring, in temperate latitudes.

This unqualified and somewhat arbitrary division of the year, however, has led many persons into error, respecting the real state of the weather, during these two seasons; some supposing that during the rainy season, more or less rain falls every day; and, on the other hand, during the dry season, an uninterrupted spell of hot and dry weather prevails for six successive months. This is so far from being the case, that, as a general rule, it may be stated, that some rain falls in every month in the year; and, in every month, there is some fine, clear, pleasant weather. During my residence in Liberia, I seldom observed a deviation from this general rule. Much more rain, however, falls, during the six months beginning with May, than during the remaining six months beginning with November. It is difficult, however, to determine at what time each of the two seasons actually commences and closes. As a general rule, I think the middle of May may be set down as the beginning of the rainy season, and the middle of November that of the dry season. In order, however, to give an accurate and comprehensive statement of the character of the climate and seasons of Liberia, it may be the best plan to note the vicissitudes of each month in the year, as they are usually presented.

January is usually the driest, and one of the warmest months in the year. Sometimes, during this month, no rain at all falls; but generally there are occasional slight showers, particularly at night. Were it not for the sea-breeze, which prevails with almost uninterrupted regularity, through the greater part of the day, on almost every day throughout the year, the

weather would be exceedingly oppressive during the first three or four months of the year. As it is, the oppressiveness of the rays of the tropical sun, is greatly mitigated by the cooling breezes from the ocean: which usually blow from about 10 o'clock A. M. to about 10 P. M., the land-breeze occupying the remainder of the night and morning; except for an hour or two about the middle of the night, and about an hour in the forenoon. During these intervals, the atmosphere is sometimes very oppressive. The regularity of the sea-breeze, especially in the month of January, is sometimes interrupted by the longer continuance of the land breeze, which occasionally does not cease blowing until 2 or 3 o'clock P. M. This is what is called the *harmattan* wind; about which a great deal has been written; but which does not generally fully accord with the forced descriptions of hasty observers or copyists.

The principal peculiarity of the harmattan wind consists in its drying properties, and its very sensible coolness, especially early in the morning. It seldom, perhaps never, continues the whole day; and usually not much longer than the ordinary land-breeze, at other times in the year. When this wind blows pretty strongly, the leaves and covers of books sometimes curl, as if they had been placed near a fire; the seams of furniture, and of wooden vessels, sometimes open considerably, and the skin of persons sometimes feels peculiarly dry and unpleasant, in consequence of the rapid evaporation of both the sensible and the insensible perspiration. But these effects are usually by no means so great as they have been represented to be. What is generally called the harmattan season usually commences about the middle of December, and continues until the latter part of February. During this time, especially in the month of January, the atmosphere has a smoky appearance, sim-

February, March, and April—Tornadoes.

lar to what is termed Indian summer in the United States, but generally more hazy.

The average height of the mercury in the thermometer, during the month of January, is about 85°. It seldom varies more than ten degrees during the twenty-four hours of the day; and usually it does not vary more than four degrees between the hours of 10 A. M. and 10 P. M. In this month, however, I have seen the mercury stand at the lowest mark, at which I ever observed it in Liberia, that is, at 68°. This was early in the morning, during the prevalence of a strong and very cool land-breeze. In this month I have also seen the mercury stand at the highest mark, at which I ever observed it—that is, at 90°. The air is sometimes uncomfortably cool before 8 o'clock A. M., during this month.

During the month of *February*, the weather is generally similar to that of January. There are, however, usually more frequent showers of rain; and sometimes, towards the close of this month, slight tornadoes are experienced. The harmattan haze generally disappears about the last of this month; and the atmosphere becomes clear. The range of the thermometer is about the same as in January.

*March* is perhaps the most trying month in the year to the constitutions of newcomers. The atmosphere is usually very oppressive during this month, the sun being nearly vertical. The occasional showers of rain, and the slight tornadoes, which occur in this month, do not usually mitigate the oppressiveness of the atmosphere, as might be supposed. The variation in the state of the atmosphere, as indicated by the thermometer, seldom exceeds 6° during the whole of this month. The average height of the mercury is about 85°.

*April* is significantly called the "tornado month," the most numerous and most

violent tornadoes usually occurring during this month. The ordinary state of the weather, in reference to the degree of heat, and its influence on the system, is not very different from that of the three preceding months. The showers of rain are usually more frequent, however; and the visitations of those peculiar gusts, called *tornadoes*, are much more common in April, than in any other month. These are sudden, and sometimes violent gusts, which occur much more frequently at night, than during the day. Although they usually approach suddenly and rapidly, yet certain premonitory evidences of their approach are almost always presented, which are generally easily recognized by persons who have frequently observed them. They generally commence from northeast, or east-northeast, and rapidly shift around to nearly south-east; by which time the storm is at its height.

At the commencement of a tornado, dark clouds appear above the eastern horizon, which rapidly ascend, until a dense lurid-looking mass spreads over the whole hemisphere. As the heavy mass of clouds ascends and spreads, the roaring sound of the wind becomes stronger and louder, until suddenly it bursts forth in its fury; sometimes seeming as if it would sweep away every opposing object. Very seldom, however, is any material injury sustained from these violent gusts. The scene is sometimes awfully grand, for fifteen or twenty minutes, during the formation and continuance of a heavy tornado. Sometimes the whole hemisphere presents a scene of the deepest gloom; the darkness of which is momentarily illuminated by vivid flashes of lightning, in rapid succession; and sometimes tremendous peals of thunder burst upon the solemn stillness of the scene. The rain seldom falls, until the violence of the gust begins to subside; when a torrent usually pours down for a short time, seldom

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May—June—July—August—September—October—November.

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more than half an hour; after which, the wind shifts around towards the west; and generally, in about an hour from the commencement of the tornado, the sky becomes serene, and sometimes almost cloudless.

The weather during the month of *May* is usually more pleasant, than in the two preceding months. The atmosphere is generally not quite so warm and oppressive. Sometimes copious and protracted showers of rain fall, during the latter half of this month. Tornadoes also occasionally appear in the month of *May*. The average height of the mercury in the thermometer is usually two or three degrees less than during the four preceding months.

*June* is perhaps the most rainy month in the year. More or less rain usually falls nearly every day or night in this month. Although there are sometimes clear and pleasant days in *June*; yet there are seldom twenty-four successive hours of entire freedom from rain. The sun is, however, seldom entirely obscured for a week at a time; and he frequently shines out brightly and pleasantly, in the interstices between the floating clouds, several times during the day; occasionally for several hours at a time. During this month, as in all the other rainy months, more rain always falls at night than in the day time; and, indeed, there are very few days in the year, in which the use of an umbrella may not be dispensed with some time during the ordinary business hours. In the month of *June*, the atmosphere is always considerably cooler than in the preceding months; and I generally found it necessary to wear woollen outer as well as under garments; and to sleep beneath thick covering at night, in order to be comfortably warm. The sensible perspiration is always much less, during this month, and the five succeeding months, than during the other

six months in the year. The mercury in the thermometer seldom rises above 80° in this month: the average height being about 75°.

During the months of *July* and *August*, a great deal of rain also generally falls; but perhaps less in both these months than in the preceding one. There is always a short season of comparatively dry, and very pleasant weather, in one or both of these months. This season usually continues from three to five weeks; and generally commences about the 20th or 25th of *July*. Sometimes, for several successive days, the sun shines brilliantly and pleasantly all day; and no rain falls at night. The air, however, is always refreshingly cool and agreeable. This is perhaps the most pleasant time in the year. This is what is commonly called "the middle dries." It seems as if Providence has specially ordered this temporary cessation of the rains, for the purpose of permitting the ripening and gathering of the crops of rice, which are generally harvested in *August*.

*September* and *October* are also generally very rainy months; especially the former. Sometimes more rain falls in *September*, than in any other month in the year. Towards the close of *October*, the rains begin to be less copious; and sometimes slight tornadoes appear, indicative of the cessation of the rainy season. The sea breezes are usually very strong, during these two months; and the atmosphere is generally uniformly cool, and invigorating to the physical system.

During the month of *November*, the weather is generally very pleasant, the temperature of the atmosphere being agreeable to the feelings—not so cool as during the five preceding months, and not so warm as during the five or six succeeding ones; the average height of the mercury in the thermometer being about 82°. Frequent showers of rain usually fall in this month,

December—Extremes of heat and cold.—Productions—Rice.

both in the day and at night ; but generally they are of short duration. Slight tornadoes also generally appear in this month. The sun may usually be seen a part of every day in the month ; and frequently he is not obscured by clouds during the whole of the time in which he is above the horizon.

*December* is also generally a very pleasant month. Occasional slight showers of rain fall during this month, sometimes several sprinklings in one day, but seldom for more than a few minutes at a time. The mornings in this month are peculiarly delightful. The sun usually rises with brilliancy and beauty ; and the hills and groves, teeming with the verdure of perpetual spring, are enriched by the mingled melody of a thousand cheerful songsters. Nothing that I have ever witnessed in the United States exceeds the loveliness of a December morning in Liberia.

On the whole, I regard the climate of Liberia as decidedly pleasant ; notwithstanding the scorching rays of the tropical sun, and the “abundance of rain” which falls during the year, especially in the months of June, July, September and October. So far as the pleasantness of the climate and weather

is concerned, I would decidedly prefer a residence in Liberia, to one in any part of the United States.

The extremes of the thermometrical state of the atmosphere may be set down at 65° and 90°. I have never heard of the mercury in a good thermometer having sunk below the former, nor arisen above the latter point, in the shade. The average height of the mercury, during the rainy season, may be set down at about 76°, and during the dry season at 84°. The mean temperature for the year is about 80°.

In regard to the comparative healthiness of the two seasons, I may state, that my observations fully convinced me, that the rainy season is more conducive to health than the dry season, in both new-comers and old settlers. In reference, however, to the acclimating process, I think that no great advantage can be gained by arriving at any particular time of the year, more than at any other time. Unnecessary exposure to the heat of the sun in the dry season, and to the rain in the wet season, should alike be avoided. Care and prudence should be exercised by new-comers at all times during the year.

### CHAPTER III.

#### PRODUCTIONS.

Nearly all the different kinds of grain, roots, and fruits, peculiar to intertropical climates, thrive well in Liberia ; and many garden vegetables that belong more properly to temperate climates, may be raised, in quality not much inferior to the same kind of articles produced in climates peculiarly adapted to their growth and maturation.

The only kind of grain, however, that has yet been cultivated to any considerable extent, is *Rice*, which is the great

staple of intertropical Africa, and the principal article of food of the numerous aboriginal inhabitants. It is also used extensively by the Liberians. And it is undoubtedly the most wholesome article of food which can be used in that country. It is not cultivated very extensively by the Liberians, in consequence of their being able generally to purchase it more cheaply from the natives, than the cultivation of it would cost. In consequence, however, of the increasing demand, it has, of late years

## Indian Corn—Sweet Potatoes—Cassada—Yam.

commanded a better price than formerly ; which has induced some of the citizens to engage in raising it. Until within the last few years, scarcely any persons attempted to raise it ; but at present this valuable grain may be seen growing in the neighborhood of several of the settlements in Liberia. Although it grows much better in low, wet land ; yet it thrives very well in land more elevated ; such as will produce most other articles usually cultivated. It is generally sowed in April, and harvested in August. Sometimes two crops may be made in one year ; but generally only one is made. It yields so abundantly, that, notwithstanding the extreme indolence of the natives, who do not work on their farms three months in the year, they usually raise much more than they require.

*Indian corn*, or *maize*, will grow very well on some lands in Liberia ; and although it does not thrive so well as in some parts of the United States ; yet I am quite satisfied that it might be cultivated much more extensively in Liberia than it ever yet has been. I have seen some fine, large ears of corn, that were raised on the St. Paul's river. The small-grained corn, usually called Guinea-corn, no doubt will grow well in Liberia (Guinea, whence its name is but strange to say, I seldom saw it growing there. The natives in the vicinity of the settlements seldom, if ever, raise it.

A variety of excellent roots may be raised in Liberia : the most common of which are, the *sweet potato*, *cassada*, *yam*, and *tania*.

*Sweet potatoes* may be raised in great abundance, with very little labor, on almost every kind of land, at any time during the year. I have seen them growing freely in the sandy soil, within fifty yards of the ocean. The poorest persons may easily have a sufficiency of this nutritious vegetable. Those raised in some parts of Liberia are very fine. They gen-

erally thrive better in the rainy season, especially on the high lands ; but in some places, they thrive very well in the dry season, especially on the flat land bordering on the rivers ; and, in many places, they may be gathered during every month in the year, from the same piece of land.

The *Cassada* (as it is usually called, but perhaps more properly *cassava*) is a shrub which grows from four to eight feet in height, having several white fleshy roots, covered with a coarse, rough skin. The stem of the shrub is round and jointed, having numerous branches, which are furnished at the upper part with alternate leaves, divided into three, five, or seven, acute lobes. The root, which is the only part that is used, arrives at perfection in from nine to fifteen months. The roots vary in size, from six to eighteen inches in length, and from three to eight in circumference. In taste, when not cooked, it very much resembles the taste of a fresh chestnut. This vegetable may be raised abundantly, on any kind of soil. It is the only vegetable, except rice, that is cultivated to any extent by the natives. It is usually prepared for use by being boiled, after the skin or rind has been removed, or by being roasted in ashes ; and, when properly cooked, it is very palatable and nutritious. The tapioca of the shops is the fecula of the root of the *cassada*.

The *Yam* is a slender, herbaceous vine, having large tuberous roots, sometimes nearly 20 ind, but generally elongated, like the *cassada*, but much larger. The roots of the *yam* are sometimes three feet long, and weigh twenty or thirty pounds. They usually arrive at perfection in four or five months ; and they yield very abundantly. The root of the *yam* is more farinaceous or mealy, when cooked, than that of the *cassada*—almost as much so as the Irish potato. They are more digestible than the *cassada* ; and I think more palatable.

Tania—Beans—Peas—Cabbages—Tomatoes—Cucumbers—Watermelons, &c.

The yam is one of the most wholesome and nutritious esculent roots of any country ; and it may be produced in any desired quantity in Liberia.

*Tania* is a delicate, broad-leaved plant, about two feet in height, having a bulbous root, which, when prepared like Irish potatoes, resembles those excellent vegetables very nearly in taste ; and it is a very wholesome and nutritious article of food. It may be raised easily and abundantly.

There are other esculent roots, peculiar to tropical climates, which have not yet been introduced ; but which, no doubt, would thrive well in Liberia. I have alluded particularly to those only which have been introduced, and which are cultivated there—those which I have seen and eaten myself. And, in addition to those articles to which I have alluded, I may name a few other garden vegetables, that I have seen growing in Liberia : the most common of which are, *Lima* or *butter beans*, *snap beans*, *black-eyed peas*, *cabbages*, *tomatoes*, *cucumbers*, *watermelons*, *pumpkins*, *muskmelons*, *cantaloupes*, *beets*, *radishes*, and *carrots*.

*Lima beans* may be raised abundantly, at any time during the year. In consequence of the absence of frost, the vines live and bear for several years ; and as the beans are being continually reproduced, they may be gathered from the same vines, during every month in the year, and for three, four, five, or more, successive years. The vines yield in a few months after the planting of the bean, so that no family ought ever to be without this excellent vegetable. They are equal to those raised in any part of the United States.

*Black-eyed peas* may be raised in any necessary quantities. They come to maturity in about six weeks from the time of planting ; and they may be raised at any time during the year.

*Cabbages* do not thrive so well in Liberia

as they generally do in the United States—that is, they do not produce so fine heads. They grow very rapidly ; and sometimes the stalk attains the height of several feet. They do not generally go to seed. When, however, good seed can be procured from other countries, and proper attention is given to the cultivation of the cabbage, fine, large, tender heads may sometimes be produced.

*Tomatoes* may be easily raised ; and when the seed are procured from abroad, the fruit is large and well flavored—equal to the produce of most other countries.

*Cucumbers* will perhaps thrive as well in Liberia as in any other country.

*Watermelons* thrive as well in some parts of Liberia, as in most parts of the United States ; especially when good seed can be procured from abroad. Some as fine watermelons as I ever saw were raised in the vicinity of Monrovia. So far as I could learn, the best time to plant the seed is in March or April.

All the other articles that I have enumerated, and several other garden vegetables, that seem to belong more properly to temperate climates, may be raised in Liberia without any difficulty, if the seed can be obtained from those countries to which these vegetables seem to be peculiarly adapted. Hence, the necessity of importing seeds, if persons wish to have American vegetables on African tables. And here I would particularly recommend to persons who intend to emigrate to Liberia, to take with them a variety of garden seeds. And, in order to protect them from being injured by the salt air of the ocean, I would advise that they should be sealed up in vials or bottles ; or wrapped in paper, and packed away in saw-dust.

A great variety of *fruits* is raised in Liberia ; many of which are indigenous. The principal fruits are, the *orange*, *lime*, *lemon*, *pine-apple*, *guava*, *mango*, *plantain*,

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 Oranges—Limes—Pine Apples—Guavas—Mango—Plantain.
 

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*banana, okra, papaw, cocoanut, tamarind, pomegranate, granadilla, African cherry, African peach, scusop, sweetsoy, sorrel, cacao, rose apple, and chiota.*

The *Orange* tree thrives as well perhaps, and bears as fine fruit in Liberia as in any other part of the world. The tree, when full-grown, is about the size of ordinary apple-trees in the United States, but much more handsome. One tree usually bears as many oranges as an apple-tree of the same size bears apples. Although ripe oranges may be procured at any time of the year, yet there are two seasons at which they are more plentiful than at other times. One season is about the middle of the year, and the other about the close of the year. It is not uncommon to see blossoms, buds, young fruit, and full-grown fruit, on the same tree, at the same time; so that while some of the oranges are ripening, others are being produced. In the town of Monrovia, many orange trees may be seen adorning the sides of the streets, as well as in the yards and gardens of the citizens.

*Limes* and *lemons* are in superabundance, in nearly every settlement in Liberia.

*Pine-apples* grow wild in the woods, in great abundance; and when allowed to ripen, before being pulled, they are very finely flavored. The apple grows out of the centre of a small stalk, one or two feet high, and it is surrounded by prickly, pointed leaves or branches. I have seen thousands of them, in half an hour's walk. They are considerably improved by cultivation in good, rich land. They are not, however, a wholesome fruit, although very palatable; and many persons have made themselves sick by eating them too freely.

*Guavas* grow very abundantly, on trees about the size of ordinary peach trees. This fruit resembles the apricot in appearance, but not in taste. It is not very pal-

atable, when uncooked; though some persons are very fond of it. It, however, makes the best preserves, and the best pies of any fruit with which I am acquainted. The *guava jelly*, which is almost universally regarded as a very delicious article is made from this fruit. Though I believe the *guava* tree is not indigenous to Liberia, yet it grows so luxuriantly as to become a source of much inconvenience in some places.

The *Mango*, (or *mango-plum*, as it is usually called in Liberia,) also thrives well. It is the product of a handsome tree, about the size of an ordinary apple-tree. The fruit is about the size of an ordinary apple, but oval, or egg-shaped. In taste, it approaches more nearly to the American peach, than any other tropical fruit I ever ate. The mango makes very superior preserves.

The *Plantain* is a beautiful, broad-leaved, tender, fibrous stalk, that grows to the height of from eight to fourteen feet. The leaves, which are the continuation of the fibrous layers of the soft, herbaceous stalk, are generally about six feet long, and from one to three feet broad. The fruit-stem proceeds from the heart of the stalk; and, when full-grown, it is about three feet long, and beautifully curved, extending about two feet beyond the cluster of fruit, and terminating in a singular and beautiful purple bulb, formed of numerous tender layers, that can be easily separated. One stalk produces only one cluster or bunch of fruit; and, when this is removed, by cutting the stem, the stalk dies; but cions spring up from the original root, around the old stock, and in a few months, these also bear fruit, and then die, giving place to other new stalks. So that, in two or three years from the time of the first planting, the number of stalks and bunches of fruit will be increased six-fold, or more. The venerable parent-stock, as if loth to leave her rising pro-



Banana—Okra—Papaw—Cocoanut.

geny unsheltered from the sweeping tornado, generally continues to spread her broad leaves over them, until they shall have attained a sufficient size to stand firmly before the destroying blast of the storm-king; and then, one by one, the expansive leaves or branches wither, and fall to the ground, leaving the aged, worn-out stalk to be prostrated by the passing breeze. The fruit of the plantain is cylindrical and slightly curved, somewhat tapering towards the end. It is usually from six to nine inches long, and one to two in diameter. At first, it is of a pale green color; but, when fully ripe, it is yellow. It arrives at maturity in about eight months. Most persons in Liberia cut the bunches before the fruit has ripened; but, it is much better when it is allowed to ripen before being separated from the stalk. It is usually prepared for the table by being boiled, baked, or fried; and it is perhaps the most luscious and wholesome vegetable of tropical climates, and one of the most valuable fruits in the vegetable kingdom. It may be produced at any time in the year; and, with a little judicious management, every family may have this excellent and nutritious article every day in the year.

The *Banana* is so much like the plantain, in every respect, except in the taste, and a slight difference in the appearance of the fruit, that the description of one will answer for both. Indeed, it is difficult to distinguish one from the other, when they are growing. The fruit of the banana is only about half the length of the plantain; and not so much curved. It is also much softer when ripe, and is more frequently eaten uncooked; although it may be prepared in the same manner as the plantain. The taste of the plantain very much resembles the taste of apples cooked in the same way; while that of the banana is *sui generis*—unlike any fruit of

the United States. The plantain and banana trees or shrubs are among the most beautiful vegetable growths of tropical climates.

*Okra* is the fruit of a small tree, ten or twelve feet high. It is a soft, pulpy, and very mucilaginous fruit; which, when boiled, forms a thick, semi-fluid, pleasant and nutritious article of food—an excellent adjunct to rice. It may be raised easily and abundantly in Liberia.

The *Papaw* is a tall, slender, herbaceous tree, of very rapid growth, sometimes attaining the height of thirty feet. The body of the tree is usually naked to within two or three feet of the top, and is marked with the cicatrices of the fallen leaves, which wither and fall as the tree continues to grow, giving place to others above them. Sometimes, however, there are several branches attached to the upper part of the body of the tree; each of which branches produces a cluster of fruit. The leaves are very large, have long footstalks, and are divided into numerous lobes. The fruit is nearly round, of a pale-green color, becoming yellowish as it ripens, and is about the size of the head of a young infant. One variety of the papaw, however, bears fruit of an elongated shape somewhat like a pear; but considerably larger than the other variety. The fruit of the papaw has a sweetish taste. It is very soft; and, when fully ripe, and stewed, it resembles in both appearance and taste the best pumpkins of the United States;—when stewed, before it has ripened, and made into pie, it so much resembles the green-apple pie, in taste as well as appearance, that the most fastidious epicure might be deceived by it, if he did not stop to think that apples do not grow in Liberia.

The *Cocoanut* is perhaps the most beautiful tree of tropical climates. It has long, curved leaves or branches; that hang

## Tamarind—African Peach—Sour-sop—Sweet sop, &amp;c.

usually from the upper part of the body, which rises sometimes to the height of thirty feet, or more. The fruit grows in clusters near the base of the stalks of the leaves. The coccolut tree is seldom raised in Liberia, except as an ornament. A few of these stately and beautiful trees may be seen in some of the settlements.

The *Tamarind* is a large, spreading tree, having very sugar, deep-green leaves. The fruit grows in elongated pods, similar to the butter-bean. Although the tamarind is indigenous, and thrives as well perhaps in Liberia as in any other part of the world; yet the people do not give any attention to the gathering of the fruit, except for their own use; and, indeed, very few seem to care any thing about it. I think, however, it might be made a profitable article of exportation.

The *Pomegranate* is a dense, spiny tree ten or twelve feet high. It produces beautiful brilliant large red flowers; and the fruit is about the size of a large apple, and covered with a thick coriaceous rind. It is filled with a multitude of small seeds; and the pulp is slightly acid and astringent. This fruit is seldom cultivated in Liberia; although I presume it will thrive as well as in most other parts of the world.

The *African Cherry*, so called in Liberia, is a very peculiar fruit. It is about the size of the ordinary morello cherry of cultivated States; and, in taste, it more resembles the canberry. The tree is usually about fifteen feet high. The great peculiarity in the growth of this fruit, is in the manner in which the short pedicels are attached to the tree—not to the end of the branches, but to the body and sides of the tree; the stems of the fruit being about one third of an inch long. This fruit makes very fine jarts—just as the canberry.

The *African Peach*, of which there are several varieties, is a large, round, acid fruit—one variety being about twice the size of the largest peaches in the United States. These trees, some of which are very large, grow abundantly in the forests of Liberia. The fruit is used only for making preserves; which, when properly made, are surpassed only by the guava.

The *Sour-sop* is a large, pulpy, acidulous fruit, which grows on a tree about the size of an ordinary apple-tree. The fruit is nearly pear-shaped, and is about as large as an ordinary cantelope. It is covered with a thick, knotty rind. When perfectly ripe, it is a very pleasant fruit—especially when a little sugar is sprinkled over the pulp. It is also very good when fried in slices; in which state it somewhat resembles in taste fried sour apples.

The *Sweet sop* is a fruit somewhat similar to the sour-sop, but not so acidulous, nor so pleasant to the taste. It is seldom used.

The *Cacao*, from which *chocolate* is produced, though not yet extensively cultivated, thrives well in Liberia, and doubtless might be made a very profitable article of cultivation.

The *Rose-apple* is a small round fruit which takes its name from its delightful fragrance. It is not very palatable, however, and is seldom eaten.

The *Granadilla* is a large fruit that grows on a vine. It is about as large as a moderate-sized cantelope. No part of the fruit is eaten, except the seeds and the mucilaginous substance by which they are surrounded. These are loosely confined to the centre of the fruit. The taste of this mangle resembles the American canberry more than any other fruit with which I am acquainted.

The *Sorrel* is a large shrub, having deep-red blossoms; which are often used

Productions continued—Exportable articles—Coffee.

for making tarts. It grows freely in Liberia, and it is a very handsome ornament to a yard or garden.

The *Chiota* is the fruit of a vine. It is about as large as an ordinary pear. When properly prepared, by stewing, it affords a wholesome, palatable, and nutritious article of food; and it may be easily raised in Liberia.

The celebrated bread-fruit, of the island of Tahiti, which was introduced into the British West-India Islands, by order of the government, will grow well in Liberia. But, as there are so many other articles

of a somewhat similar kind that are preferable to it, it is seldom used.

I have seen several other indigenous fruits in Liberia; some of which are very palatable; some very fragrant, but not very acceptable to the palate; and others not possessing any good qualities to recommend them. And there are many other kinds of fruits, peculiar to tropical climates, which, no doubt, would thrive well in Liberia; but which have not yet been introduced. I have alluded to those only that I have seen growing there, and of which I have eaten.

CHAPTER IV.

PRODUCTIONS—continued.

EXPORTABLE ARTICLES.—In addition to the vegetable productions of Liberia, to which I have alluded, there are some others that are worthy of particular notice; especially as they are the principal exportable articles, some of which may be rendered very profitable articles of commerce. These are, *Coffee, Ginger, Pepper, Sugar, Ground-nuts, Indigo, Cotton, and Arrow-root.*

In reference to *Coffee*, I am quite satisfied that the soil and climate of Liberia are as well adapted to the cultivation of this article, as the soil and climate of any other part of the world. I believe that as good coffee can be raised in Liberia as in any other coffee-growing country: and I have no doubt that, by proper attention, it may be raised as plentifully as in any other part of the world. These opinions are not hastily formed, but are founded on personal observations in some of the West-India Islands, as well as in Liberia, and on frequent conversations with persons who have visited various other parts of the world in which coffee is cultivated. I have frequently seen isolated trees growing in different parts of Liberia, which

have yielded from ten to twenty pounds of clean dry coffee at one picking: and, however incredible it may appear, it is a fact, that one tree in Monrovia yielded four and a half bushels of coffee, in the hull, at one time; which, on being shelled and dried, weighed *thirty-one pounds*. This is the largest quantity of which I ever heard, as having been gathered from one tree; and it was the largest coffee tree I ever saw, being upwards of twenty feet high, and of proportionate dimensions.

I have given particular attention to observations and investigations, respecting the cultivation of coffee in Liberia; and I think I may safely set down the average quantity that may be raised, by proper cultivation, at four pounds to each tree—that is, each tree of six years old and upwards. The coffee tree will begin to bear in three years from the time at which the seeds are planted. At the end of the fourth year, the average quantity may be set down at one pound to each tree; at the end of the fifth year, two and a half pounds; and, at the end of the sixth year, four pounds. About three hundred trees

## Estimates of the quantity and value of Coffee.

can be planted in one acre of ground, allowing the trees to be twelve feet apart. Therefore, in four years from the time the seeds are planted in the nursery, 300 pounds of coffee may be gathered, which, at ten cents a pound, (a very moderate rate for Liberia coffee, which has frequently been sold for twenty cents a pound in this country,) would be worth \$30. At the end of the fifth year, 750 pounds may be gathered—worth \$75; and at the end of the sixth year, 1,200 pounds—worth \$120. So that, in six years from the time of the planting of the seeds, agreeably to this calculation, 2,250 pounds of coffee may be produced on one acre of ground—worth \$225. And, accordingly, ten acres, properly cultivated, will yield during the first six years, an income of \$2,250; and at least \$1,200 during each succeeding year.

This calculation I regard as pretty nearly correct; but even admitting that I have set down the quantities and the value at one-fourth more than they should be, it will still appear, that the cultivation of coffee may be rendered a source of wealth in Liberia, even supposing that nothing else could be raised for exportation, which is by no means the case. I am quite satisfied that at least \$100 a year may be realized, by proper management, from the produce of one acre of ground cultivated in coffee, after the sixth year from the time of planting of the grains in the nursery. And, as it does not require much labor, one person may easily cultivate three acres, with a little hired assistance in clearing the land, and may devote one-half of his time, or more, to the cultivation of other articles, for the use of himself and family, and for sale; and he need not work more than five or six hours a day. So that, by industry, prudence, and economy, any man may realize at least \$300 a

year for his labor, over and above the necessary expenditures of himself and family; the other articles which he may raise being quite sufficient for the comfortable support of his household. I am aware that the truthfulness of this statement has seldom been exhibited in the agricultural operations of the citizens of Liberia; but this fact does not necessarily confute the truth of the statement, nor does it sufficiently exhibit the impracticability of its being fully and easily carried out. And I might add, that it does not require the exercise of profound wisdom, even in a cursory observer, to discover the real cause why the feasibility of the result of the foregoing calculation is not more frequently exhibited.

Coffee is indigenous to Liberia. It may frequently be seen wild in the woods. It is, however, much improved by cultivation. The most approved method of raising it, is to plant the grains in a nursery, and to transplant when the tree has attained the height of a foot and a half. Some trees arrive at their full growth in five or six years: while others continue to grow more than double that length of time. The grains grow in pairs, covered with a hull, from which they can be easily separated when dry. The coffee blossom is a beautiful and highly fragrant little white flower, and the berry, when fully ripe, is of a pale red color. The average height of full grown trees is about eight feet. They continue to bear from ten to twenty years. I have seen some fine flourishing trees, which were upwards of twenty years old. As the coffee tree is easily cultivated, and as the fruit is easily cured, the cultivation of this profitable and useful article should occupy a portion of the time of every family in Liberia.

Next to coffee, perhaps *Ginger* may be

## Ginger—Pepper—Sugar-cane.

made the most profitable article of culture, for exportation. The superior quality of this article, and the peculiar adaptation of almost every kind of soil in Liberia to its abundant growth, justifies the opinion that it may be rendered a profitable article of commerce. It will certainly grow as well in Liberia as in any other part of the world; and, in quality, it is scarcely inferior to the best that is produced in any other country. I have no certain data from which I can determine the average quantity of ginger that may be raised on a given quantity of land; but, from what I have seen, I am quite satisfied that it may be raised in great abundance, with very little labor. The average increase is at least twenty-fold, when properly cultivated. From six to eight months is the time usually required for its growth and maturation.

*Bird Pepper*, which is known in the United States as "African Cayenne Pepper," is an indigenous article, that may be found almost every where throughout Liberia. I have frequently seen great quantities of it growing wild in the woods. And if a little attention were given to the cultivation of it, thousands of pounds might be annually exported. It grows on bushes about four feet high. The pods are generally about half an inch long, and one third of an inch in circumference. One species, however, is four or five times this size. The smaller kind is generally preferred. In quality, it is perhaps not equalled by that raised in any other country. The cultivation of it requires scarcely any attention; and the only preparation of it for the market, consists in picking the pods and spreading them out to dry. The shrub grows very rapidly, and the fruit arrives at maturity in six or eight months from the time of planting. It yields more abundantly about the beginning of the year; but as the fruit contin-

ues to be reproduced throughout the year, it may be collected at any time. The natives use it very freely. It is not uncommon to see them with a bunch of pepper in one hand and a roasted cassada in the other, taking, with each bite of the latter, one of the pods of the former, one of which pods would serve to pepper a full meal for a person not so accustomed to its use. Perhaps the reader of this may wonder why pepper is not more freely gathered and exported, as it grows so abundantly in the wild state, and as it may be so very easily cultivated. To this I can only respond, *echo answers, why?*

*Sugar-cane* will, perhaps, thrive as well in Liberia, as in any other country. I have seen stalks more than fifteen feet high, and two or three inches in diameter. The average size of the stalks is considerably larger than those raised in the island of Barbadoes, and the juice is equally sweet, and proportionably more abundant. This I have tested, by personal observations. Sugar, however, probably will not soon become a profitable article of exportation, in consequence of the inability of the Liberians to compete with the West-India planters. Liberia, however, may be, and ought to be, independent of all the rest of the world for this luxury. Every farmer ought to raise, not only enough of this article for the use of his own family, but some to dispose of to his mercantile, mechanical, and professional neighbors. And, even if he cannot conveniently manufacture the sugar, in any considerable quantity, he can certainly express enough of the juice in a few hours, with his own hands, in a mill of his own construction, to make several gallons of *syrup*, (not molasses, but a much better article,) which answers very well for every practical or necessary purpose.

## Ground-nuts—Cotton—Arrow-root.

*Ground-nuts*, or *pea-nuts*, may be raised in great abundance, in Liberia. And, as these nuts generally find a ready market in the United States, and in Europe, they certainly will richly repay the Liberian farmer for the little trouble and labor which their cultivation requires. I do not know what quantity may be raised on a given portion of land, but I do know that they yield very abundantly.

Although the cultivation of *Indigo* has not met with much attention in Liberia—comparatively few persons having given any attention at all to it—yet, as the indigo plant grows so luxuriantly, and may be raised so easily, the manufacture of indigo is certainly worthy of particular notice. The plant grows so abundantly in Liberia, that it constitutes one of the most troublesome weeds in the gardens, and even in the streets of the settlements. And, with a little skill and industry in preparing the indigo, it may be rendered one of the most profitable crops that can be produced in tropical climates. The plant arrives at maturity in three or four months from the time of planting the seed; and as it springs up again, in a few weeks after having been cut, one crop will yield five or six cuttings in the course of the year. Several varieties of the indigo plant may be found growing wild in Liberia, all of which yield very fine indigo, some of which is perhaps equal to that produced in any other part of the world. The preparation of indigo requires a little more patience and industry than the Liberians generally are in the habit of bestowing on any one article of cultivation; which is the principal cause why it has not been more extensively raised and cured.

*Cotton* has not yet been cultivated to a sufficient extent to enable me to determine from observation whether it may be made a very profitable article of agriculture. Several old women planters, who had

grown grey in raising cotton in Georgia, Mississippi, and other Southern States, before they went to Liberia, have repeatedly told me, that the cotton-tree or shrub will grow as well, and yield as abundantly in Liberia as in any part of the United States. The natives in the interior manufacture cotton goods pretty extensively from the indigenous growth, of which there are several varieties. The best grows on trees or shrubs eight or ten feet high—similar to those raised in the United States, but larger in the average size. And, as the trees are not injured by frosts, of course they continue to bear for several years. I doubt not that Liberia might become one of the most important cotton-growing countries in the world.

*Arrow-root* probably thrives as well in Liberia as in any other part of the world. This is a tender plant, which usually grows to the height of two or three feet. The stems, of which several rise from the same root, are round, branched, jointed, and leafy. The leaves resemble the common sword-grass. They are alternate, and are from three to six inches in length. The root, which is the only part used, is beautifully cylindrical, straight, and tapering, (hence the name of the plant,) fleshy, scaly, and furnished with numerous long, white fibres; and is usually from three to eight inches in length. This plant is one of the most luxuriant growths in Liberia. It is easily propagated, and it arrives at maturity in about five months. In preparing it for use, the roots are washed, and then beat into a pulp, which is thrown into a tub of water, and agitated, so as to separate the fibres from the amylose part; the latter of which remains speedily in the water, while the former is removed. The milky fluid, thus formed, is strained, and allowed to stand several hours, until the fecula, or starch, shall have settled at the bottom of the vessel. It

Arrow-root—a substitute for flour.

is then washed with a fresh portion of water, strained again, and allowed to subside again; this process sometimes being performed three or four times; after which, it is spread out, and dried in the sun. About eight pounds of the pure powder or flour may be produced from a bushel of the roots.

As arrow-root may be produced so abundantly in Liberia; and as it is one of the most important exportable articles, as well as one of the most valuable articles of food, it deserves particular notice. The cultivation of the plant requires so little labor or attention, and the process of manufacturing the fecula from the roots is so very simple and so easily performed, that I am quite certain this article may be rendered a source of wealth by exportation. From having frequently seen it growing, and having seen the quantity which a very small piece of ground produced, I think the average quantity that may be raised on almost every kind of soil in Liberia, may be safely and truly set down at one hundred bushels to the acre; that is, eight hundred pounds of pure manufactured arrow-root, or fecula. An old gentleman at Monrovia, who has raised a considerable quantity of it, stated to me, that, from the quantity he has made from a certain portion of land, he was quite satisfied that one acre, properly cultivated, will yield two thousand pounds. And a farmer at Caldwell assured me that he made one hundred and thirty pounds from the produce of one-sixteenth of an acre of ground. But, as it will be perceived, I have placed the average quantity at less than one-half of the proportionate quantity that has actually been raised; and this, I think, is not beyond a fair estimate. Assuming therefore, that one-half an acre will produce four hundred pounds, (a quantity which almost any family may easily raise and manufacture,) and allowing the average

net price to be only fifteen cents a pound; it will appear that \$60 may be realized from this small quantity of land; with comparatively little labor.

During the last few years, arrow-root has been used pretty extensively in Liberia, as a substitute for wheat-flour; and, as I have frequently eaten it, in various forms of bread, I hesitate not to say, that I believe it to be not only a good substitute for flour, but much more suitable and wholesome for persons residing in tropical climates. It makes very fine biscuits, either alone or when mixed with a small quantity of sweet potatoes. It also makes very good pie-crust; and I have seen light or leavened bread, made of arrow-root, which so much resembled wheat-flour bread, in both appearance and taste, as to deceive professed judges. Besides these, I have eaten the nicest kind of pound and other sweet cakes, made of this article, instead of flour, with the ordinary adjuvants.

The foregoing named articles constitute the principal exportable articles of agriculture, that may be raised in Liberia. And I have endeavored to give faithful and truthful statements, in reference to each of them. And, while I regret that greater attention has not yet been given to the cultivation of these articles, I cherish the hope that the period will arrive at which all of them will be cultivated extensively; if not by the present inhabitants, by others who may emigrate thither, having more energy, industry, and perseverance. I candidly believe, that a man may acquire more wealth in Liberia by judicious management in the cultivation of the soil, than he could acquire in any part of the United States with double the quantity of land, double the amount of labor, and in double the length of time: even allowing for all the disadvantages under which he may have to labor in Liberia, and all the facilities which he might have in the United

Productions continued—Palm—Camwood, &c.

states. I am quite certain, that, by pursuing a regular, systematic, and persevering course of agricultural industry and industry, the citizens of Liberia may, with no other means than those which every individual can readily procure, produce not only enough of those articles that are peculiar to tropical climates, for their own

use, but a large surplus for exportation. And, any man in Liberia, who enjoys a tolerable degree of health, and who does not live comfortably and independently, may, without any violation of the principles of truth or justice, charge the deficiency to his own account.

## CHAPTER V.

PRODUCTIONS—continued.

ONE of the most important and valuable indigenous articles of the vegetable kingdom in intertropical Africa, is the *Palm*; which is one of the most remarkable and useful trees in the world. There are two or three varieties of the palm in Liberia; one of which, by its towering height and graceful appearance, attracts particular attention. The tree that yields the nuts from which oil is extracted, seldom grows to the height of more than twenty-five feet. It resembles the cocoanut tree, having, like that, long leaves or branches, attached to the upper part of the body of the tree, and which hang in graceful curves. The fruit grows in clusters or bunches, near the base of the stalks of the leaves. The nut is oval, about an inch long; and, when ripe, is of a deep red color. The oil is extracted from the pulp of the nut, which yields very abundantly. It is manufactured by the natives; and several hundred thousand gallons are annually exported from Liberia. Palm trees may be seen in every part of Liberia, adorning the hills and valleys; and furnishing not only great quantities of oil for exportation, as well as for domestic uses, but yielding a variety of other useful substances;—a peculiar beverage called “palm wine,” produced by tapping the tree, and which in taste very much resembles wine-when;—a substance that grows at the top of the tree, called “palm-cabbage;” and a starch, when boiled, has an agreeable

taste:—and from the fibres of the leaves the natives get materials for making baskets, hats, &c. Palm oil is extensively used by the Liberians as a substitute for sperm oil and candles; and also in culinary operations, as a substitute for lard and butter. And, for all needful purposes, to which those articles are applied, it answers very well. The average price of palm oil in Liberia is about thirty-three cents a gallon.

Another valuable tree, which is indigenous and peculiar to intertropical Africa, is the *Camwood*; which grows abundantly in the forests, about a hundred miles from the coast. This is one of the most valuable dye-woods in the world; and hundreds of tons are annually exported from Liberia.

The *Palm-christi*, the seeds of which yield *Castor oil*, is also indigenous to Liberia; and I have no doubt that the regular cultivation of this valuable shrub would richly repay the laborer for the little trouble that it would require.

The tree which yields the medicinal balsam, called *Copaira*, may also be seen occasionally growing wild in the forests of Liberia; and I doubt not that the juice might be collected in sufficient quantities to become a valuable article of exportation.

Several varieties of the *Acacia* (Gum Arabic tree) grow in Liberia; and some of the gum is of superior quality.

I have seen some specimens of *Olibanum*,



Animals. Elephants—Leopards—Hippopotami—Crocodiles—Deer—Monkeys, &c.

(Frankincense,) which, as the natives informed me, were collected from large trees that grow abundantly in the forest.

I have frequently seen the *Caoutchouc*, or gum-elastic tree, growing in Liberia; some of which are forty feet, or more, in height.

The forests of Liberia also furnish many different kinds of valuable timber, well suited for ship or boat building, cabinet work, and all the various operations in carpentry; the principal of which are Wistmore, Brimstone, Rose-wood, Mulberry, Bastard Mahogany, Saffron, Mangrove, African Oak, Hickory, Poplar, Persimmon and Sassa-wood. Some of these make very beautiful cabinet work.

A considerable variety of medicinal plants, besides those to which I have alluded, may be found in Liberia: among which is the *Croton Tiglium*, a small tree or shrub, with spreading branches, yielding a capsular fruit, from the seeds of which croton oil is extracted.

ANIMALS.—The principal wild animals which infest the forests or rivers of Liberia, are the Elephant, Leopard, Hippopotamus, Crocodile, Porcupine, Wild Hog, Boa Constrictor, several varieties of the Deer, and several of the Ape.

*Elephants* are quite numerous about a hundred miles back in the interior; and the natives make a regular business of hunting and killing them, for the ivory of which their tusks are composed. These animals were formerly frequently seen in the vicinity of some of the settlements; but they are now seldom seen within fifty miles of the sea-coast.

*Leopards* are occasionally seen prowling about the outskirts of some of the settlements; and they sometimes carry away small domesticated animals at night. But they are much less numerous and troublesome, than formerly. They never attack a person, except after having been wounded.

*Hippopotami* are occasionally seen on the

banks of the rivers, some of them of immense size—weighing a thousand pounds, or more. They are sometimes killed by the natives. They are harmless animals; and they always endeavor to escape, when interrupted, by plunging into the water.

*Crocodiles*, (erroneously called Alligators) are frequently seen basking in the sunshine on the banks of the rivers, or on the little rocky islands. They always make their escape into the water, when approached by a person on shore, or in a boat or canoe.

*Boa Constrictors* are sometimes killed in the forests in Liberia. The largest I ever saw was fifteen feet long, and fifteen inches in circumference. Much larger ones have been killed. I never heard of their attacking an individual. Serpents, however, are much less numerous in Liberia than is generally supposed; and poisonous snakes are perhaps less common than in many parts of the United States.

*Deer* are very numerous, and they afford excellent venison.

*Monkeys* are found in great numbers in the forests. I have seen a dozen, or more, at one time, jumping from tree to tree, with great dexterity. Several species of the ape tribe are occasionally caught by the natives; among which is the *Chimpanzee*, so remarkable for its near approximation in appearance to the human race.—Some of these “wild men of the woods” have been seen as large as an ordinary sized man. The largest that I ever saw was about the size of a child two or three years old. The old ones are never caught, and are seldom killed. They are very powerful, as well as very active.

Besides these, the *Guana*, the *Ichnumon*, the *Stoth*, the beautiful and ever-changing *Chameleon*, many varieties of *Lizards*, and several species of *Ants*, may frequently be seen.

One variety or species of ants is very re-

## Ants—Drivers—Domesticated Animals.

markable, in consequence of the immense conical mounds of earth which they rear, and in which they make their nests.—These mounds are sometimes ten or twelve feet high, and eight or ten feet in diameter at the base. These ants are about the size of the large black ant in the United States. The *queen*, however, is much larger—some of them two inches in length and nearly two inches in circumference.—In the interior of the mound, about half-way from the bottom, is a large vaulted chamber, the floor of which is very hard and smooth. In the centre of the floor is the nest, in the inmost recess of which, lives the queen in luxurious ease, accompanied by the king, whose size does not vary much from the ordinary ant, but who is easily recognized by a striking difference in physical conformation. When the queen dies, or is captured, all the ants desert the hill, which is left to “crumble into dust again.” Many of these deserted mounds may be seen in almost every part of Liberia.

Another species of ants (familiarily known by the name of *Drivers*) is still more remarkable. They are about the size of the black ant of America—that is, about one-fourth to one-half of an inch in length. They may frequently be seen marching along, in the most systematic order and regularity of movement. They move in a solid compact column of great length: and they appear to be under the direction of able leaders and rigid disciplinarians. No common obstacle turns them out of their course: and whoever is so unfortunate as to come in their line of march will have to pay for his temerity: and will be reminded to be more careful in future. Hundreds seize fiercely on the intruding foot, and the unwary object of their vengeance is compelled to retreat from the scene of attack. These tiny

warriors are very troublesome; but they are exceedingly useful in expelling noxious vermin from every place into which they may enter in the course of their perambulations. Whenever a battalion of drivers enters a dwelling house, the inmates are obliged, for the time, to yield undisputed possession, at least of that part of the house which the little warriors may be searching. They are not, however, always unwelcome visitors: for they never fail to expel rats, mice, and every species of vermin—making a clean sweep as they go. Whenever they come to a small water-course, the larger and stronger ones dexterously form themselves into an arch, by clinging to each other; thus making a bridge, over which the smaller ones pass dry-shod. Even in their ordinary march over level ground, they seem to cling to each other in a solid phalanx; the stronger ones occupying the flanks, and arching themselves over the weaker ones, who occupy the centre, and who are thus protected by the others.

All kinds of animals, both large and small, are afraid of drivers; nor have they any regard to size in the objects of their warfare. They are very useful in chasing away or killing snakes, lizards, scorpions, centipedes, &c., which, were it not for the drivers, would be exceedingly troublesome, and even dangerous. Whenever they visit a house, they search it all over, and expel every living, moving thing, that they find: after which, they retire peaceably, and yield possession to the former occupants. They make their nests beneath the surface of the ground: and I presume they sally forth from their quarters only in search of food; at which times the line of march is sometimes a hundred yards, or more, in length.

The principal *domesticated animals* in Liberia, are Bullocks or Beeves, Cows,

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 Bees—Cows—Sheep—Goats—Horses, &c.—Diseases.
 

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Sheep, Goats, Swine, Geese, Turkeys, Ducks, and Chickens.

*Bees* are frequently brought into the settlements for sale by the natives, and they are sometimes raised by the citizens. They may be raised easily in any desirable quantity.

*Cows* are numerous, but they do not give much milk. Some of the cows which are brought from the interior, one or two hundred miles from the coast, are as large as ordinary cows in the United States; but they do not give half so much milk. If properly attended to, however, I think they would afford milk much more plentifully.

*Sheep* and *Goats* can be very easily raised in Liberia—as easily, perhaps, as in any other part of the world; and they both afford good wholesome animal food. The sheep are covered with hair instead of wool. The goats furnish very good milk.

*Swine* do not thrive so well in Liberia as in some parts of the United States; but they can be raised in sufficient abundance for the wants of the people.

*Geese* and *Ducks* may be raised without any more difficulty than in the United States; and within a few years past,

*Turkeys* have become much more plentiful than they formerly were.

Perhaps in no other part of the world can *Chickens* be raised more easily and more plentifully, than in Liberia. With very little trouble, every family may always have a sufficient supply of chickens.

*Horses* are plentiful in the interior, within three hundred miles of the coast, but they do not thrive well in the settlements: perhaps in consequence principally of the want of proper management. They are occasionally brought down by the natives, and some of them are very beautiful.—They are small—seldom more than twelve hands high. I am quite satisfied that they never can be used to much advantage, as draft animals, in the present settlements of Liberia. But for all necessary purposes, the native oxen can be used as a substitute for horses. I have seen some of the small bullocks broken to the yoke, and working steadily and effectually. The Liberians, however, have not yet given much attention to the breaking and working of oxen—by no means as much as they ought to give. I trust that the time may not be distant, when the plough and the cart will be much more extensively used, than at present.

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 CHAPTER VI.

## DISEASES.

The physical system of every individual who removes from a temperate to a tropical climate must undergo some change—must experience some process of acclimation, which may or may not be attended with much fever, according to circumstances—to the constitutional peculiarities of the individual, the nature of the surrounding country, the previous habits of life, the situation at the time with respect to regimen, comforts, &c.; and by no means the least, the state of the

mind with respect to calmness and patience, or irritability and disquietude, together with other imaginable circumstances; so that the developments of fever are generally various, requiring various methods of treatment—each method to be adapted to the individual case, as circumstances may require. Hence, the impossibility of furnishing an exact or complete treatise on the subject—of setting down any characteristic marks of the *Acclimating Fever*, or of adopting any particular mode of treatment.

## Character of the acclimating fever.

Some persons, in passing through the physical change, or process of acclimation, have so little fever that they do not require medical treatment at all. And I have no doubt that many persons might pass safely through the acclimating process without taking a grain of medicine, if they could or would exercise the necessary precautions in the preservation of health—such as proper attention to their habits, diet and clothing, to the extent of exposure to the heat of the day, as well as to the damp and chilling night-air, and especially to the avoidance of all sources of mental inquietude.

In some cases the physical system becomes sufficiently adapted to the climate to resist the surrounding deleterious influences, in two or three months. In other cases, a year or more elapses before this desirable point is reached. And in some cases, the physical system and the climate seem to be at variance for several years.

In the course of my observations in the treatment of the acclimating fever, I frequently noticed that persons who had previously suffered from local inflammatory affections were extremely liable to have a recurrence of some or all of the symptoms of the old disorder, in consequence of the previously inflamed organ or tissue being the "weak point" in the system. And in some cases, persons who might have enjoyed tolerable health in the United States die very soon after their arrival in Liberia, in consequence of the physical system not being sufficiently vigorous to undergo the necessary change, in order to become adapted to the climate. Hence the impropriety of persons emigrating to Liberia whose constitutions have become much impaired by previous disease, by intemperance, or otherwise. And hence the necessity of Missionary Societies being careful in regard to the physical as well as to the moral qualifications of those

persons who offer themselves as missionaries to Africa.

The majority of persons from the United States who take up their residence in Liberia have some development of fever, in some form or other, within the first two months after their arrival. The most common form, perhaps, is that which medical writers generally call "Bilious Remittent Fever," which is usually simple in its character, and which generally yields readily, in a few days, to simple, mild, appropriate treatment. The first attack, however, is generally followed, within a few days or weeks, by a second similar, or nearly similar, attack, or, which is more common, by one or other of the varieties of the intermittent form of fever; and to this latter kind of fever the individual is more or less subject until his system shall have become sufficiently adapted to the climate and to the local influences of the country to resist their peculiar effects. Not unfrequently the first attack, as well as the subsequent ones, assumes the intermittent form; in most cases, however, attended with considerable biliary derangement.—The fever seldom assumes a strictly continued form, is seldom inflammatory, and it seldom terminates in permanent congestion of any internal organ. The congestive and inflammatory forms are perhaps never exhibited, except in cases in which there is some striking constitutional peculiarity. Bilious vomiting frequently occurs, in both the remittent and intermittent forms; and sometimes gastric irritability prevails to a considerable extent, and renders the proper management of the case rather difficult. In all cases, the tongue is considerably furred, and in many cases, headache, more or less violent, continues during the continuance of the fever. Temporary delirium is sometimes present, during high febrile excitement; but it usually subsides with the remission or intermission of the fever.

## Treatment of the acclimating fever.

In reference to the most successful mode of treatment, it is impossible to furnish any statement that will be sufficiently intelligible and comprehensive to justify the application of remedial medicinal means, without the judicious exercise of an enlightened judgment. I may, however, point out a few land-marks, and a few rocks and shoals, by which the untutored medical mariner may be able to steer his course with more safety than if he were entirely destitute of such information.— And first, I would remark that there are two points of essential importance, which cannot be too strongly impressed on the consideration of all persons who expect to reside in Liberia: The first is, the great advantage of mental as well as physical quietude, and patient resignation; which necessarily imply the avoidance, as much as possible, of both mental and physical irritability, of despondency or gloomy forebodings, and of distrust in Divine Providence. Whoever goes to Africa, ought to go with the expectation of living; and if he should get sick, he ought to try to get well again—to avoid all excitement, and to endeavor to be cheerful and contented. The greatest difficulty with which I generally had to contend, in the treatment of the acclimating fever, was to prevent mental depression or despondency in my patients. And I have invariably found, in cases in which patients obstinately and pertinaciously yielded to despondency, and abandoned all hope of getting well, that sooner or later their expectations were realized, and death closed the scene. The other point to which I would direct particular attention is, the danger of using medicinal agents too freely—of relying too much on the curative virtues of medicines, and not giving due attention to auxiliary means; which indeed are often of much more importance than all the pills and powders of the doctor or the druggist. I am quite

satisfied that the lives of many persons have been sacrificed in Liberia by the too free or injudicious use of medicines, especially calomel and drastic cathartics.

In reference to the use of calomel, I may state, that although I generally found the necessity for its use in the majority of cases of the acclimating fever which came under my treatment, yet I used it much more cautiously and sparingly than it is generally used by medical practitioners in the United States. I never gave more than eight grains at a time, and seldom gave more than fifteen grains during one attack of sickness. Whenever I found the necessity for its administration, in any case, I sometimes gave it in about two grain doses, at intervals of about two hours, usually in combination with some diaphoretic or sweating medicine, especially James' powder. After three or four of these doses had been taken, I usually directed a moderate dose of castor oil to be taken, within ten or twelve hours after the first dose. In the beginning of an attack of fever, especially in those cases in which the tongue was much coated, and the patient complained of nausea, without free vomiting, I frequently gave a dose of calomel and ipecacuanha, in the proportion of six or eight grains of the former to about twenty of the latter. This dose usually produced sufficient action on the bowels, as well as vomiting. If it failed to move the bowels, I always directed some mild laxative afterwards—generally castor oil or rhubarb. In some cases I had no occasion to give any other medicine, during the attack, than the dose of calomel and ipecac; except generally, in the intermittent form, quinine to break up the periodicity of the attack. I never gave calomel with the intention of producing salivation;—this result I always endeavored to guard against; and, of the hundreds of cases which I treated, very few ever

## Medicines used in treating the acclimating fever.

complained of the slightest soreness of the mouth. In the few cases, in which salivation resulted from the administration of calomel, in consequence of a strong constitutional tendency in the patients, I always observed that convalescence was more tedious—the patient requiring a longer time to regain his health and strength.

My favorite diaphoretics were, James' powder and sweet spirits of nitre; both of which I used frequently and freely. I generally found the latter of these two medicines very beneficial in producing perspiration, when given during the febrile excitement, in the dose of about a teaspoonful, at intervals of an hour or two. I sometimes found it necessary to be more cautious in the administration of the former, especially in cases in which much tendency to gastric irritability existed. I seldom used nitrate of potash (a favorite diaphoretic with some physicians in this country,) in consequence of the tendency, in many cases, to irritability of the stomach.

In reference to the use of opiates, I may state, that, although I frequently found them highly beneficial, under circumstances which peculiarly indicated the necessity of their being administered; yet, I always endeavored to avoid the use of them as much as possible, in consequence especially of their general astringent and constipating effects. Whenever the case seemed to demand the use of any opiate, and the bowels were not constipated, especially if they were looser than desirable, I generally gave free doses—seldom less than fifty drops of laudanum, or one-fourth of a grain of morphia. In some cases, in which the general system was in a highly irritable condition—quick and feeble pulse, dry skin, and sometimes violent headache, and sleeplessness, with or without delirium, I sometimes gave about one-third of a grain of morphia, in combination with

five or six grains of James' powder, at night; and generally the patient was decidedly better on the following morning; after having enjoyed refreshing sleep during the night. A teaspoonful of paregoric, under similar circumstances, sometimes also produces very beneficial effects. But the judicious administration of opiate medicines, requires the exercise of more skill and judgment, than most persons possess, who have not given particular attention to the study of the animal economy, and the effects of medicinal agents.

I would strongly discourage the use of Epsom salts, as a cathartic: the only way in which it ought to be given, (if at all,) is in broken doses—not more than a teaspoonful at a time: in some cases of eruptive diseases, it may be beneficially used in this way; but it should never be given in active purgative doses. This remark is applicable to all other hydrogogue and drastic cathartic medicines. A favorite combination with me was three grains of calomel, one-sixth of a grain of tartar emetic, and six grains of compound extract of colocyath, made into two pills: I sometimes added one grain of gamboge; but I generally found the pills sufficiently active without the gamboge, if the medicines were good. This dose I used frequently to give, as an anti-bilious cathartic, and as a preparative for the administration of quinine, during an attack of intermittent fever. I have several times taken this combination myself, and always with decided benefit. As a mild, certain, and safe laxative, in cases in which the principal object was to produce action of the bowels, I never found anything to answer so well as castor oil. Rhubarb, either alone or in combination with calomel or magnesia, will sometimes answer very well.

I frequently found great advantage from the application of blistering plasters; es-

## Leeches—Quinine—how administered—Stimulants.

pecially to the pit of the stomach, in cases attended with much irritability of that organ. I generally found that the vomiting ceased as soon as the plaster began to produce its peculiar effects. I sometimes also applied a blister plaster to the back of the neck, in violent headache, with decided advantage. In cases attended with marked inflammatory action in the stomach—great tenderness to pressure, irritability, and other prominent symptoms, I sometimes resorted to local depletion, by cupping; and I sometimes applied cups to the temples, to relieve the head. I, however, more frequently resorted to the free application of *leeches* in such cases. These little animals are very plentiful in Liberia, and they can be easily procured, at any time. They are about one-third the size of the ordinary foreign leeches, which are used in the United States, and they draw much less blood. I have had nearly a hundred of them applied to myself at one time.

In the intermittent form of fever, *quinine* is the *remedium magnum*. I seldom failed to break up the attack, in a few days, by the judicious use of this medicine: which, perhaps, approaches more nearly to a specific than any other medicinal article. Although I had frequent attacks of intermittent fever during my residence in Liberia; yet I never had more than three paroxysms, during any one attack; and I was generally able to prevent the third by the use of this valuable remedy. My usual mode of taking or administering it was in doses of about two grains, at intervals of two hours, commencing about eight hours before the time of the expected chill or ague; whenever circumstances would admit of its administration in this way. Sometimes I gave it at intervals of one hour, commencing four or five hours before the time of the expected paroxysm. I generally found eight or ten grains to be

sufficient. In cases in which the chill or ague came on early in the forenoon—say 7 or 8 o'clock—I generally gave a single dose of about five grains, within an hour of the time at which the paroxysm was expected. In most cases, I believe one such dose would prevent an ague, if taken within an hour of the expected attack.—But, in consequence of more or less irregularity respecting the time at which a paroxysm might be expected, I generally found it necessary to commence the use of the quinine several hours previous to the time at which the preceding paroxysm made its appearance. It is best to continue the use of quinine two or three days after the chill or ague has been stopped, in two grain doses taken several times during the day.

I have but little confidence in the habitual use of wine, brandy, porter, ale, or any thing else of the kind, either as preventives of fever, or as tonics during convalescence, after an attack. The climate itself is too exciting and stimulating to the systems of new-comers, generally; and consequently I always found it better to avoid the use of stimulating beverages, except in cases of great physical prostration by disease, in which some stimulating draught was imperatively demanded.—During the first six months of my residence in Liberia, I always found the use of wine injurious, at any time, in my own case. And I am decidedly of opinion, that cold water is the best beverage, in Liberia as well as in the United States.—The moderate use of wine or porter, or even brandy, may sometimes be advantageous, in those cases in which the system has become greatly enfeebled, by frequent attacks of fever, and by the protracted enervating influences of the climate; but in the majority of cases, I think the use of such beverages ought to be entirely dispensed with.

Diseases continued—Dysentery—Diarrhea—Rheumatism—Dropsy.

I frequently found the use of various domestic remedies highly beneficial in the treatment of fevers in Liberia, particularly herb-teas, and the pepper cataplasm. The latter is almost universally used, instead of mustard: in consequence of pepper being more convenient, as well as more active in its effects. The pepper-pods, whether green or red, are cut into small pieces, and mixed with corn or rice-meal, or wheat-flour, and water, and made into a poultice or plaster, in the same manner as mustard plasters are usually made. The burning effects of this poultice will be experienced in a few minutes. I have frequently found it to be very

beneficial in relieving nausea or vomiting, and also colic pains, when applied over the stomach or abdomen. It is also a powerful revulsive agent, when applied to the ankles, wrists, bottom of the feet, or calves of the legs; and it is peculiarly beneficial in some cases, in which the use of such an agent is indicated. The infusion of an herb called "fever tea," is generally very beneficial, as a diaphoretic, when taken warm, and as an agreeable beverage when taken cold, instead of water. Various other vegetable substances, which abound in Liberia, may be advantageously used, in making innocent and useful medicinal infusions.

## CHAPTER VII.

DISEASES—continued.

In addition to the ordinary remittent and intermittent fevers, to which I have particularly alluded, I occasionally met with cases bearing some resemblance to other kinds of fever, that are usually described in medical books; but they were generally not sufficiently marked to justify the distinctive appellations of nosological arrangement. I never saw a well-marked case of yellow fever in Liberia; although this disease is sometimes experienced at Sierra Leone, especially among European residents. Acute inflammatory diseases are not common in Liberia. I seldom met with distinctly marked cases of pleurisy, or of any other violent or active inflammatory disease. It is very fortunate that such affections are not common; for they are generally almost necessarily fatal in their termination.

Dysentery and diarrhoea are by no means so common, as might be supposed. I seldom met with very obstinate cases of these diseases. Slight attacks of diarrhoea are occasionally brought on by the intemperate use of some kinds of fruits; and occasionally, in new-comers, by the

too free use of some kinds of animal food, particularly fresh pork, beef, or fish. I met with a few cases of chronic dysentery; and I experienced two or three attacks myself. Rheumatism, both acute and chronic, occasionally occurs, never very violent, however, in either form. Dropsical affections are rather frequent; especially local anasarca, or dropsy of the cellular membrane beneath the skin—a consequence of general debility, produced by frequent attacks of fever, inattention to diet and clothing, and undue exposure. It is not uncommon for the feet and legs of persons to swell more or less, during the acclimating process; especially white persons and bright mulattoes. This swelling generally gradually subsides, as the system becomes better adapted to the climate. Ascites, or dropsy of the abdomen, sometimes occurs, as a consequence of chronic affections of the liver or spleen, especially enlargement of one or both of these organs, after a long residence in the country. Such cases, however, are not so common as might be supposed. I never met with more than a dozen cases, during my residence in Libe-



Cutaneous affections—Leprosy—Ulcers.

ria. No course of treatment which I ever pursued, in such cases, seemed to produce any decidedly beneficial effects.

Cutaneous affections are quite common; some of which are peculiar to the country or climate. Among the common eruptive diseases, measles and erysipelas are most frequently observed. The former of these diseases prevailed very extensively throughout Liberia, in the early part of 1845; but it was generally milder than it usually is in the United States. The latter generally appears in a mild form, with very little or no febrile action in the system. In the early part of 1848, small-pox prevailed pretty extensively in one of the settlements; but, in nearly every case, it was in the modified form, called varioloid. This form of small-pox has several times prevailed, epidemically, in one or other of the settlements; but it seldom proved fatal. I never saw but one case of genuine variola in Liberia; although, in some cases, the small-pox contagion results in the exhibition of this form of the disease, during the epidemical prevalence of varioloid.

A peculiar endemical pustulous affection, called "craw-craw," or "kru-kru," sometimes attacks persons who are not very careful in regard to cleanliness. It is a very common disease among the natives, and it is generally regarded as being contagious. It is sometimes very painful and troublesome. Another disease of the skin, which is common among the natives, and which is occasionally observed among the Liberians, is the "yaws;" which consists of elevated excrescences, usually appearing in continuous clusters, and discharging a thin corrosive ichor. Sometimes the yaws appear on the soles of the feet, and prevent the patient from walking. Both these diseases are tedious and perplexing to both the patient and the doctor.

Leprosy, or leprosy, is occasionally seen in

Liberia; especially among the aborigines. This distressing disease usually appears in brownish blotches scattered over the body; from which a corrosive serous fluid is discharged. The toes and fingers frequently become ulcerated; and sometimes the unfortunate invalid loses all the fingers on one hand or both, or all the toes on the feet; and the soles of the feet are sometimes marked with deep fissures, or scooped out into ugly sores. The blotches on different parts of the body sometimes degenerate into foul and fetid ulcers of an irregular jagged appearance. This miserable disease sometimes continues to harass the individual for years; and it frequently results in death. I have, however, frequently seen native persons who had recovered, with the loss of a portion of their hands or feet, or of both, after having suffered excruciatingly for months or years. I never saw but one well-marked case among the Liberians, and that was in a very old man.

The most common and troublesome cutaneous affections, (if they may be so classed,) that occur in Liberia, are *indolent ulcers*; which sometimes appear spontaneously; but which generally result from injuries, by which the skin is broken. The texture of the cutaneous and the muscular fibre seems to be more lax in tropical than in temperate climates; and slight scratches, or abrasions of the skin, are much more liable to degenerate into ulcers,—the degree of liability depending on the constitutional temperament of individuals, their habits, mode of living, &c. White persons and mulattoes are more subject to ulcerous affections as well as to most other diseases, than black persons; in consequence, I presume, of their physical systems being less adapted to the peculiarities of the climate; a fact which must be admitted by all. These ulcers, though not generally very painful, are exceedingly annoying, especially when they occur on the feet; and they

## Flatulent colic—Intestinal worms—Enlargement of Spleen, &amp;c.

do not generally heal readily, sometimes continuing for several months. If persons would be sufficiently careful to avoid injuries of the skin, they would not be very liable to these troublesome affections.

Chronic nervous diseases are not very common in Liberia. I occasionally met with hysteria in females; and I saw one or two cases of epilepsy, and one case of tetanus, or locked-jaw. Convulsive affections are very rarely met with, in either infants or adults. Paralytic affections are occasionally, though seldom, seen. I never saw a distinctly marked case of whooping-cough in Liberia: nor did I ever hear of its having prevailed epidemically.

*Flatulent colic* frequently demands the attention of the physician. It is generally the result of the imprudent use of some indigestible article of food; and it occurs more frequently in persons during the first few months of their residence, than in old settlers. Sometimes the stomach and bowels become greatly distended with gas; and the patient suffers very violent pain in the abdomen. I had several attacks of this painful affection, during the first year of my residence in Liberia; the most violent of which was caused by the eating of a small piece of cheese. I was generally able to relieve the patient, afflicted with this disease, by the administration of a large dose of ipecacuanha, followed by a full dose of castor oil; the operation of which was sometimes assisted by an active injection; together with the application of a large pepper poultice over the abdomen. In some cases, especially when attended with a tendency to diarrhoea, I gave nothing but the laudanum; or, what sometimes had a better effect, a pill composed of one-sixth or one-fourth of a grain of morphine and two grains of camphor. Persons cannot be too careful in avoiding the use of such articles of food as are not easily digestible.

A very common affection, especially

among children, is that of *intestinal worms*.

The most common kind of worms which infest the alimentary canal, is the *ascaris lumbricoides*, or common round worm. All the other varieties, however, are sometimes observed. I have seen several cases, in which the individuals voided detached portions of the tenia, or tape-worm. In prescribing for patients having worms, I depended more on the free use of spirits of turpentine, combined with, or followed by, castor oil, than any other vermifuge, in all the varieties. Sometimes I gave a few grains of calomel, followed in three or four hours by a free dose of oil and turpentine.

In Liberia, as in other malarious countries or districts, cases of enlargement of the spleen—vulgarly called “fever-cake”—are frequently observed—the result of repeated attacks of intermittent fever. This is much more common in white than in colored residents: very few white persons, indeed, are able to live five years in Liberia, without having more or less enlargement of the spleen. It is more frequently met with in mulattoes than in black persons; indeed, I do not remember a single case which came under my observation, in a person of undiluted African extraction; although I have no doubt that such persons are sometimes thus affected. The principal difficulty that usually arises from this affection, is, that it predisposes to dropsical affections. In many cases, however, dropsical effusions do not follow enlargement of the spleen; except occasional swelling of the lower extremities. A protracted sea-voyage, or a change of climate, is the only means with which I am acquainted, that will effect a reduction of this burdensome appendage.

Slight catarrhal affections, (influenza,) are occasionally experienced in Liberia: especially during the harmattan season: but these generally pass off in a few days, without any serious injury. I never knew

## Catarrhal affections, &amp;c.—“Sleepy Disease.”

a case to result in active inflammation of any part of the respiratory apparatus.

Some other diseases which are common to most countries, may be occasionally observed in Liberia; but the variety is much less than in the United States; and, except in some old chronic affections, in broken-down constitutions, convalescence is generally much more rapid, in consequence of the less violence of the attack. Among the many attacks of fever that I experienced, I never was obliged to remain in my room more than a week, at any one time; and I very seldom was confined to my bed longer than twenty-four hours at a time. The danger in new-comers generally consists more in the frequency, than in the violence, of the attacks of sickness. And the majority of colored immigrants, who have sufficient prudence to use such means for the preservation of their health in Liberia, as an enlightened judgment would dictate, usually enjoy as good health, after the first year of their residence, as they formerly enjoyed in the United States. In some cases, indeed, the state of the health of immigrants is decidedly improved by the change of residence from America to Africa. The large majority of cases of sickness that came under my observation, among those persons who had resided a year or more in Liberia, was in indolent, and consequently indigent persons, whose prudence was commensurate with their improvidence. Indeed, in view of the heedlessness, carelessness, and indolence of some persons, who were scarcely ever sick, I was astonished at their continued exemption from disease.

I will conclude this brief medical history of Liberia with a short notice of a peculiar endemic affection, which may be termed Lethargus, but which is commonly called the “Sleepy Disease.” I have seen eight or ten cases of this somniferous malady; five or six of which were among persons

who had emigrated from the United States. It is, however, much more frequently exhibited among the aborigines than among the Liberians. The only characteristic mark of this affection, is an irresistible tendency to sleep—the patient frequently falling asleep, even while eating. He can generally be easily aroused; but he almost immediately relapses into a state of profound slumber. The patient scarcely ever experiences the slightest pain; and no febrile symptoms are usually exhibited, until near the fatal close of the incurable malady. The appetite is usually voracious, and the bowels obstinately constipated. The food taken does not seem to nourish the system; in consequence of the disordered state of the organs of digestion and nutrition; the difficulty existing principally, perhaps, in the mesenteric glands. Indeed, the whole glandular system, including the lymphatic and the lacteal glands, seems to be in a torpid state, in this affection. No peculiar marks of disease are usually exhibited, on examination after death. In all cases of which I have heard, the brain especially appeared to be in a healthy condition—at least, that organ exhibited no perceptible evidence of disease; and no other part of the body exhibited any peculiar organic affection; except some of the lymphatic glands, which presented an enlarged and inflamed appearance. Those about the neck generally appear considerably swelled; and the natives sometimes extirpate those enlarged glands, under the impression that they are the source of the affection; with what success in removing the disease may be readily imagined by any intelligent person, in whom the bump of credulity is not too largely developed.

Among the various causes of this strange affection, which have been assigned, perhaps no particular one can be fully relied on. Indolent habits, unwholesome and indigestible vegetable diet, together with

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"Conclusion."

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some peculiar influence of the climate, associated with the prolonged action of miasmata or malaria, operating on a system peculiarly predisposed to lethargy, may be regarded as the exciting cause, by which functional derangement of the nervous system is produced, resulting in a lost balance of the circulation, and a general functional impairment of the whole glandular apparatus of the body. The disease (if disease it may be called) always approaches gradually; sometimes several months elapsing before it is fully developed. And, although I have had pretty fair opportunities of testing the virtues of various medicinal agents, in different stages of the disease; yet I never was able to effect more than a temporary cessation of it, in the beginning, or a temporary mitigation of it, after its full development.

The most graphic notice of this lazy disease, with which I have met, is that given in the "Journal of an African Cruiser;" and, as I saw the patient in company with the author, I will subjoin an extract from that interesting little book: "We entered the hut without ceremony, and looked about us for old Mamma's beautiful granddaughter. But, on beholding the object of our search, a kind of remorse or dread came over us; such as often affects those who intrude upon the awfulness of slumber. The girl lay asleep in the adjoining apartment, on a mat that was spread over the hard ground; and with no pillow beneath her cheek. She slept so quietly, and drew such imperceptible breath, that I scarcely thought her alive. With some

difficulty she was aroused, and she awoke with a frightened cry—a strange and broken murmur, as if she were looking dimly out of her sleep, and knew not whether our figures were real, or only the phantasies of a dream. Her eyes were wild and glassy, and she seemed to be in pain. While awake, there was a nervous twitching about her mouth and in her fingers; but, being again extended on the mat, and left to herself, these symptoms of disquietude passed away; and she almost immediately sank again into the deep and heavy sleep, in which we found her. This poor girl had been suffering—no, not suffering, for, except when forcibly aroused, there appears to be no uneasiness, but she had been lingering two months in a disease peculiar to Africa—commonly called the 'sleepy disease.' Her aspect was inconceivably affecting. It was strange to behold her so quietly involved in sleep; from which it might be supposed she would awake so full of youthful life—and yet to know that this was no refreshing slumber; but a spell in which she was fast fading away from the eyes of those that loved her. Whatever might chance, be it grief or joy, the effect would be the same. Whoever should shake her by the arm—whether the accents of a friend fell feebly on her ear, or those of strangers, like ourselves, the only response would be that troubled cry, as of a spirit that hovered on the confines of both worlds, and could have sympathy with neither. The peal of the last trumpet only will summon her out of that mysterious sleep."

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CONCLUSION.

Had I not been apprehensive that I might unnecessarily swell the size of this little work, by details which may be easily obtained from other sources, I might have

dwelt, at considerable length, on the consideration of the nature of the civil government, and of the political institutions of Liberia.

Civil government, &c.

I might also have made particular allusion to the results of missionary operations in Liberia, and its vicinity. But as there are various sources whence information may be derived on this subject; and as such allusions and details do not come within the scope of the prescribed design of this work, it being intended particularly for the information of those persons who may be in search of truth, with the view of making Liberia the place of their future residence; I do not deem it necessary or proper for me to dwell on the detail of particulars, relative to the operations of missionary societies; especially as I do not regard myself as altogether competent to present full and faithful statements on this subject; and as I feel disposed to write only what I do know, and testify what I have seen.

In reference to the civil government of Liberia, I may here simply state, that it is based on the principles of republicanism; and, in every essential particular, it may be regarded as a miniature representation of the Government of the United States; the only particular points of difference being in the name of the national assembly, which is styled Legislature instead of Congress; and in the time of service of the principal officers of the Government. The President is elected by the popular vote, for two years, and he is eligible to re-election. The Senators, of whom there are two from each county—six in all—are elected for four years, and the Representatives, of whom there are eight in all, are elected for two years. The only cabinet officers who have yet been commissioned are, the Secretaries of State and of the Treasury, and the Attorney General. All the officers of justice are appointed by the President, with the consent of the Senate. The judicial power of the Republic is vested in a supreme court, a court of quarter sessions in each county, and magistrate's courts,

which meet monthly. No white person is allowed to become a citizen; consequently, white residents cannot hold any office in the Government.

The Government of Liberia is now altogether in the hands, and under the entire management of the citizens of Liberia; no white person, on either side of the Atlantic, being, in any way, connected with its operations. And if the disputed question has not yet been fully settled, whether colored persons are capable of self-government or not, a few years will decide the point. The people of Liberia are now fairly "self-poised;" and feeling confident, as I do, of the clemency and forbearance of all foreign nations towards this infant Republic, so long as the Government shall be maintained on the principles of national rectitude, (without which no government is worthy of encouragement,) I am quite satisfied that if the Republic of Liberia shall ingloriously fall, and her institutions be demolished, or if those institutions shall be voluntarily transferred to the control and management of any foreign power, the result will indubitably exhibit the melancholy fact, that the maintenance of an independent government by the colored race is at least a subject of doubtful practicality. I confidently hope, however, that the "lone star" of the Republic of Liberia, which is now culminating over a portion of the western coast of benighted Africa, will continue to shine, not like the brilliant meteor, or the erratic comet, but like the effulgent orb of day, which sheds his enlivening beams with increasing splendor as he ascends above the fleecy clouds that overhang the eastern sky.

In addition to the brief reflections which have been thrown out in the different parts of this work, I would here make a few suggestions which may be worthy the particular attention of those persons who may

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 Cultivation of the Soil—the chief source of wealth and independence.
 

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emigrate to Liberia. The reader will, no doubt, be fully convinced, if he believes the statements herein exhibited, of the practicability of a comfortable competency being realized in Liberia, as the reward of industry and frugality. And the intelligent man of color, who is accustomed to observation and reflection cannot but be convinced that he may enjoy the privileges of a freeman in the full import of the term, of which he is virtually deprived in every part of the United States, by the conventional rules of society among the dominant inheritors of a fairer complexion. But while I do not hesitate, in view of the facts set forth in this work, to recommend Liberia as an inviting field for enterprise, and a desirable place of residence; I may here state that, during my residence there, my eyes were not too frequently dazzled by captivating sights of agricultural industry, and of mechanical enterprise, to blind me to the conviction that much remains to be done before the little African Republic can be regarded as an earthly paradise.

In reference to the cultivation of the soil, especially, which is the true road to independence in any country, I may remark, that comparatively few of the present citizens of Liberia are regularly and systematically engaged in this branch of practical industry. Unfortunately for the prosperity of Liberia, many of the earlier settlers fancied that they had found a more easy and more speedy highway to wealth, in the wholesale, retail, and demoralizing system of barter with their ignorant aboriginal neighbors; and many of their successors, lured on by this apparently accommodating means of ease and comfort, started their little crafts in the wakes of those of their predecessors; and not a few of them, in their eagerness to become rich, have failed to be warned by the disasters which attended many of those who pre-

ceded them. But happily for Liberia, the traffic in rum, wood and palm oil is becoming so impracticable, in consequence of excess of competition, not only among the Liberians themselves, but among foreign traders, that it must soon occupy a station, as a source of wealth, inferior to that of the cultivation of the soil: the siren song of commercial experiment must give place to the earnest hum of agricultural industry. I trust that the citizens of Liberia are generally becoming aroused to a consciousness of this important truth, and indeed during the last few years more attention has been given to agriculture than previously. Yet much remains to be accomplished, to demonstrate to distant nations the fact that Liberia is one of the most productive countries in the world; a fact, which I believe may, and I hope will be clearly demonstrated by the quantity and quality of agricultural products that may be exported, and by the comfort and independence of a respectable yeomanry.

A more regular, systematic and persevering course of farming operations must, however, be introduced. Greater attention ought also to be given to agricultural experiments, to develop the resources of the soil; and to ascertain the most appropriate periods of the year for the planting of different vegetable substances. Much more attention should also be given to the raising of different kinds of stock; and to the introduction of various mechanical inventions, in carrying on agricultural operations.

One very important thing which has received very limited attention in Liberia, is that of fencing, or the enclosing of lots and fields by the means of which, many persons have frequently lost the principal part of the fruits of their labor, in the tilling of the soil. Undoubtedly, the best fences that can be made in Liberia are those that are commonly called "growing fences,"

Concluding remarks.

made by planting certain shrubs closely together, and trimming them occasionally. Several different kinds of shrubs may be easily and abundantly procured, for making these fences. And, with proper attention, a piece of land may, in two or three years, be thus securely and substantially enclosed with a fence that will last many years.

Hitherto, the people of Liberia generally have been too easily intimidated or discouraged by comparatively small obstacles; some of which have been more imaginary than real. Difficulties, however, do really exist; but these difficulties are generally far less than those which exist in carrying on farming operations in any part of the United States. And I am quite satisfied that every thing which is really necessary for human subsistence and comfort, together with many luxuries, can be raised in Liberia, with much less labor than would be required to procure the necessities of life in the United States.

Let the cultivation of the soil, then, receive that attention which it should receive, as the principal means of wealth—let a regular, systematic, and persevering course of agricultural operations be carried on; and the citizens of Liberia may live in ease and comfort and independence.

In tracing the various events connected with the rise and progress of the Republic of Liberia, no unprejudiced individual can for a moment doubt that the smiles of Heaven have rested upon it; and that the sheltering wings of a kind Providence have been spread over it for good—not only to the immigrants from this country, but to the benighted and degraded aborigines of Africa—a land which has so long been enveloped in the darkness of heathenism. And, in view of the social and political position and relations of colored persons in the United States, contrasted with the

position and relations of the free and independent citizens of that young Republic, it must be admitted by all candid persons, that the condition of those people in Liberia who are disposed to use the necessary appliances for making themselves truly independent, is vastly superior to that of free people of color in any part of this country.

Though many difficulties have been encountered in the progressive exaltation of the infant Colony to the present interesting and flourishing Republic, and though many obstacles will necessarily be presented to its onward progress; yet it is clearly evident that the experiment has been fairly tried—the experiment of establishing on the coast of Africa a community and government of colored immigrants from this country—and has been crowned with complete success: a success even beyond the most sanguine expectations of the benevolent founders of the Colonization Society; who amidst difficulties which seemed almost insurmountable, determined to try what could be done towards the establishment on the coast of Africa of an asylum and a home for the people of color of the United States; who, in the language of a public journalist, “are here restricted in the exercise of the very elementary principles of existence best calculated to expand and exalt the heart and mind,” and who, in every part of this country, must continue to labor under political and social disadvantages; from which they can be fully rescued in no other way than by voluntarily emigrating to a country in which the restrictions that are here thrown around them cannot operate—a country in which they may enjoy the benefits of free government, with all the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

In the providence of God, by the efforts of those who have been “laborers together with him,” such an asylum has been established: difficulties which at first

## Concluding remarks.

appeared almost insuperable have been overcome; and Liberia now presents an inviting field for commercial enterprise and agricultural industry, and a desirable home for all persons of color who wish to realize the privileges of freedom and the blessings of independence.

But while I would heartily recommend Liberia as a desirable place of residence for colored persons who are disposed to appreciate the advantages and to improve the privileges there afforded, I would not advise any person to emigrate thither, who will not go cheerfully, and with a determination to try to overcome every obstacle that may be presented. I am decidedly of opinion, that, with a cheerful, contented mind, and industrious habits, colored persons may live more easily, more comfortably, and more independently than they can in the United States. In Liberia, however, as in all other new countries, industry and perseverance are necessary; and while to the man of enterprise and frugality it affords a desirable home, and promises a rich reward to his labors, it offers no encouragement to those who expect to live in luxurious ease and pampered indolence.

In conclusion, I would repeat, that I firmly believe that the hand of an overruling Providence has been extended over the progressive course of that little Republic. And, whatever may be said in opposition to the wise and benevolent scheme of Colonization; and however apparently plausible may be the objections of persons who are unfriendly to the cause; it is clearly evident to any individual whose mind is unprejudiced, especially to those who have had opportunities for personal observation and investigation as to the results of that enterprise, that it is one of the instruments in the hands of the Almighty Ruler of the universe for carrying

out his wise designs with reference to Africa. And in view of what has already been accomplished, and of the incalculable amount of good which may yet be accomplished, through the instrumentality of the Colonization Society, and of the Republic of Liberia; surely no true friend of the colored race can consistently oppose the operations of the former, or withhold the expression or exhibition of a sincere desire for the continued prosperity of the latter.

Through the instrumentality of the Government of Liberia, much has been done towards the suppression of the nefarious traffic in slaves. Within the jurisdiction of that miniature Republic, whence, a few years ago, hundreds and thousands of miserable beings were transported, like inanimate objects of merchandize, to the western world, the slave-trade has been entirely abolished; and many of the contiguous native tribes have laid down their weapons of warfare, and have sought the protection of that Government. And I verily believe that God intends that the mental illumination of the degraded aborigines of Africa, is to be effected chiefly by her own returning civilized and christian children—by the influence and example of colored immigrants and teachers from this side of the Atlantic; carrying with them and introducing among the ignorant natives, habits of civilized life, and the blessings of the gospel of peace and salvation; and by the missionary labors of enlightened and converted native inhabitants. Thus shall the belligerent hordes of Africa be induced to convert their instruments of warfare into agricultural implements; thus shall the slave-trade be effectually and forever suppressed; and thus shall Ethiopia be taught to stretch out her hands unto God.



## APPENDIX.

### Sketch of the History of Liberia.

On the 21st December, 1816, a meeting of citizens of various parts of the United States was held in the city of Washington, "for the purpose of considering the expediency and practicability of ameliorating the condition of the free people of color in the United States, by providing a colonial retreat, either on this continent, or that of Africa." The Hon. Henry Clay was called to the chair, and Thos. Dougherty, Esq., appointed Secretary of the meeting. At this meeting, it was "*Resolved*, That an association or society be formed for the purpose of collecting information, and to assist in the formation and execution of a plan for the colonization of the free people of color, with their consent, in Africa, or elsewhere, as may be thought most advisable by the constituted authorities of the country." A committee was appointed to prepare a constitution, and rules for the government of the association or society. At an adjourned meeting held in the Hall of the House of Representatives, on the 28th of the same month, "a constitution was reported by the committee appointed for that purpose; and having been discussed and amended, was unanimously adopted by the meeting."—And, on motion, it was "*Resolved*, That the first election of officers of the Society shall be held on Wednesday, the 1st day of January, 1817:" on which day the *American Colonization Society* (originally called "the American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States") was fully organized by the election of the Hon. Bushrod Washington as President, the Hon. Henry Clay, and twelve other gentlemen, as Vice Presidents, Elias B. Caldwell as Secretary, W. G. D. Worthington as Recorder, David English as Treasurer, and twelve gentlemen as a Board of Managers.

The interest in the objects or designs of the Society continued to increase during the year; and in the month of November, 1817, the Rev. Samuel J. Mills and the Rev. Ebenezer Burgess, who had been commissioned by the Society, sailed for the western coast of Africa, by way of England, for the purpose of acquiring information, and of making observations, preparatory to the establishment of a colony. From the Report of Mr. Burgess, on his return to the United States,

(Mr. Mills having died on the homeward voyage,) the Society was encouraged to proceed in its benevolent enterprise.

In the month of February, 1820, the first company of emigrants, under the auspices of the American Colonization Society, embarked at New York, for Africa, in the ship *Elizabeth*, which was chartered by the United States Government. This expedition, consisting of eighty-six colored emigrants, was accompanied by three white persons, the Rev. Samuel Bacon, Mr. John P. Bankson, and Dr. Samuel A. Crozer. They proceeded by way of Sierra Leone to the Island of Sherbro, at which place they had obtained permission to reside, until an eligible site could be purchased on the main land. But as this was a very unhealthy location, and as these pioneers of African Colonization were necessarily deprived of many of the necessities, as well as comforts of life, many of them were soon seized with fever; and within a few months, all of the white men, and about one-fourth of the emigrants, died. The remainder sought and obtained permission of the authorities of Sierra Leone to locate temporarily in that colony, until a better site than Sherbro could be procured.

In the early part of the year 1821, the second company, consisting of thirty-three emigrants, and four white persons as agents of the Society and the United States Government, sailed from Norfolk for the coast of Africa. This expedition reached Sierra Leone on the 9th of March, and joined the survivors of the first company. In the latter part of this year, through the efforts of Dr. Eli Ayres and Lieutenant (now Commodore) R. F. Stockton, a valuable tract of land was purchased from the chiefs of the Dey tribe; and in the months of January and February, 1822, the little band were removed from Sierra Leone to a small island near the mouth of the Mesurado river, (called by them Perseverance Island) which they occupied until arrangements could be made for the occupancy of a part of the main land that had been purchased. On the 25th of April, 1822, the American flag was first hoisted on Cape Mesurado; the site of the present handsome and flourishing town of Monrovia; the colonists having all removed from the little

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ed, and fixed themselves as comfortably as circumstances would admit at their new home—the nucleus of what is now the sovereign and independent Republic of Liberia.

Such was the beginning of the practical operations of the African Colonization enterprise.

The colonists, however, were not long permitted to remain in the peaceful possession of their new home. It soon became evident that the surrounding native tribes contemplated an attack on the infant colony. And on the arrival of Mr. Ashmun, in August, 1822, he soon perceived the necessity of some vigorous means being adopted to afford security against the dangers to which the settlers were exposed from the treachery and cruelty of the hostile native tribes around them; and he immediately commenced a system of operations to improve the condition of the little colony. The emigrants remained in a state of anxiety, watchfulness, suffering, and uncertainty, until early in the morning of the 11th November, when a large body of armed natives made their appearance, and commenced the deadly assault. After a fierce contest of about two hours, the assailants were forced to retreat, with the loss of about 150 men. Notwithstanding their repulsion and loss, they did not abandon their design of endeavoring to exterminate the colonists. And on the morning of the 2d December, they renewed the attack, with a much larger force. But in this, as in the former battle, they were repulsed, and forced to retire, with considerable loss.—During these two assaults, which were met by the colonists with that bravery and determination that were inspired by the consciousness of total destruction, in case of defeat, four men and one woman were killed, and four men and two women severely wounded; and seven children captured, all of whom were afterwards returned. The last battle fully satisfied the surrounding natives of the superiority of their new neighbors, notwithstanding their extremely small number (not over thirty-five men); and the time of this battle has ever since been regarded as the epoch of the full establishment of the colony (now the Republic) of Liberia on the western coast of Africa. As such, its anniversary is kept as a day of public thanksgiving.

Since that time, though the colonists have met with various reverses, and have been obliged in a few instances to take

up arms against some of the contiguous native tribes; yet, during most of the time, the dove of peace has hovered over them, and the sun of prosperity has shone upon their pathway, with but few intervening clouds. And in a little more than a quarter of a century from the time when the stars and stripes were first hoisted on that forest-clad Cape, by a little company of daring adventurers, the voice of a new-born Republic was heard asking admission into the family of nations: five of which (Great Britain, France, Prussia, Belgium and Brazil,) have freely and fully acknowledged her sovereignty and independence. And there, on the coast of that benighted land, the fires of civil and religious liberty, which have thus been lighted, will no doubt continue to blaze out in attractive loveliness, until their influences shall be felt throughout the length and breadth of that vast peninsula.

Under the administration of the self-sacrificing and indefatigable Ashmun, who presided over the destinies of the infant colony, with a few brief intervals of relaxation, until the spring of 1828, (nearly six years,) the condition of the first settlement greatly improved, and other settlements were commenced; additional territory was procured by purchase from the native chiefs; and the number of the colonists was considerably increased by accessions from the United States—about eight hundred new immigrants having arrived.

The Rev. Mr. Ashmun, who had so long labored and suffered for the good of Liberia, at last sunk under the weight of his burdens: his physical system became entirely prostrated; and as the only possibility of recovery, he resolved to sail for the United States. Accordingly, on the 25th of March, 1828, he embarked for the home of his childhood, after having taken an affectionate leave of the weeping and sorrowful companions of his exile.—A few days after his arrival in this country, his wearied, worn-out body found a resting place in the silent grave-yard, and his freed spirit a home in heaven. On the departure of Mr. Ashmun, the superintendence of affairs devolved on the Rev. Lott Cary, one of the early immigrants, who had already proved himself to be eminently useful to his fellow pioneers; but whose career of usefulness was terminated by death, on the evening of the 8th of November, 1828, by the accidental explosion of a quantity of powder, in the old agency house, in which he and

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others were engaged in making cart-ridges.

The successor of Mr. Ashmun, Doctor Richard Randall, arrived at Monrovia on the 22d December, 1828, accompanied by Dr. Joseph Mecklin, Jr., as Colonial Physician and Surgeon. Dr. Randall entered on the performance of the duties of his station with a zeal and enthusiasm which soon proved that his mental energies, and his enterprising spirit were too ardent for his physical system, while exposed to the debilitating influences of the climate, and the local accessory agents of disease, of intertropical Africa. He was removed by death from the scene of his labors and sufferings, after a residence of less than four months in the Colony.—The duties of the agency, as well as those of the medical department, thus devolved on Dr. Mecklin, who was afterwards appointed to that station by the Society; and who remained in charge of the agency until the latter part of the year 1835, when he returned to the United States, and resigned his office. During his agency, the accession of immigrants from the United States was very considerable; and among the various evidences of progress, was the purchase of a fine tract of territory on the St. John's river, and the commencement of the settlement of Edina, near the mouth of that river. Several mission stations, under the auspices of different societies in Europe and the United States, were established in the Colony; and the progress of civilization and Christianity among the contiguous native tribes was very encouraging.

Dr. Mecklin was succeeded in the agency by the Rev. J. B. Pinney, who performed the duties pertaining to that important station, until about the middle of the year 1835, when, in consequence of ill-health, he returned to the United States. The Rev. Ezekiel Skinner, M. D., was his successor.

In the early part of 1834, the Colony of "Maryland in Liberia," located at Cape Palmas, under the auspices of the Maryland State Colonization Society, was commenced under the direction and superintendence of Dr. James Hall, who had previously resided at Monrovia as assistant physician, and who remained in charge of the new Colony about two years.

In the early part of the following year, (1835,) a new settlement was commenced at Bassa Cove, under the auspices of the Pennsylvania Colonization Society.—Shortly after its establishment, it was at-

tacked by a native chief, named Jo Harris, in command of a body of men, who rushed upon the defenceless settlers, and massacred about twenty of them. Those who succeeded in escaping, afterwards located on the St. John's river, opposite Edina, where there is a flourishing commercial town.

During the year 1836, the settlement of Marshall, at the mouth of Junk river was commenced; and during the same year, an important tract of land was purchased on the Sinou river, and a settlement commenced, under the auspices of the Mississippi Colonization Society. In the month of September of this year, Dr. Skinner was obliged to leave the Colony, in consequence of the impaired state of his health, brought on principally by his arduous and multifarious duties; and the duties of the agency again devolved on the Rev. A. D. Williams, a colonist, who had occupied the position of agent during the absence of Dr. Mecklin, while on a visit to the United States in 1830; and who continued to fill the office until the arrival of Thomas Buchanan, Esq., as Governor of the "Commonwealth," on the 1st of April, 1839; which event marks a new epoch in the history of Liberia.—During the latter part of the preceding year (1838) all the State Colonization Societies, except the Maryland Society, became more intimately united as auxiliaries to the parent Society; and, by agreement, the different colonies in Liberia, except the Maryland Colony, were consolidated under one Government, to be called the Commonwealth of Liberia; and Thomas Buchanan, Esq., who had spent one year at Bassa Cove as agent for the New York and Pennsylvania Societies, was appointed Governor of the Commonwealth; which office he filled with dignity and great usefulness about two years and a half, when (on the 3d September, 1841,) Liberia and the American Colonization Society were deprived by death of his valuable services—a loss that was keenly felt and deeply lamented by all who felt interested in the prosperity of Liberia, on both sides of the Atlantic.

During the administration of Governor Buchanan, the foundation of the Liberian enterprise was more firmly established than it had ever been before; and general prosperity prevailed throughout the different settlements. The several departments of the government were more systematically arranged, and more attention was given to agriculture and education than in former

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years. The citizens of Liberia were thus better prepared to assume the entire responsibilities of self-government.

By the death of Governor Buchanan, the management of the Government devolved on General Joseph J. Roberts, the Lieutenant Governor, who was appointed Governor of the Commonwealth by the Colonization Society, soon after the melancholy tidings of the death of Governor Buchanan reached the United States; and who continued to fill the office with dignity and acceptability, under the auspices of the Society, until the establishment of the Republic, and the consequent new organi-

zation of the Government. In the month of July, 1847, a Convention of delegates, elected by the people, met at Monrovia, and formed the Constitution of the **REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**, which, with a Declaration of Independence, was adopted by the people, and published to the world. In the month of October of that year, Governor Roberts was elected, and on the 3d of January, 1848, was regularly installed, the first President of the Republic; to which responsible position he has been several times re-elected; and the duties of which he has performed with patriotic devotion to the interests of the country.

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**Native Africans in Liberia.—Their Customs and Superstitions.**

LIKE the aborigines of our own country, those of Africa are divided into numerous tribes, each tribe having a dialect differing to a greater or less extent from those of the contiguous tribes, and each being characterized by some national peculiarities; the difference, however, in appearance, customs, and superstitions, not being very great among the different tribes within the territory of Liberia.

The principal tribes in Liberia and its immediate vicinity, are, the Dey, Vey, Bassa, Queah, Golah, Pessah, Kroo, Fish, and Grebo; the last named being that tribe in the immediate vicinity of Cape Palmas.

The government among the different tribes may be regarded as a kind of compound of the patriarchal, the oligarchal, and the monarchical. In every tribe, there is one man who is recognised as the head king, to whom all the other kings and chiefs of the tribe are nominally subordinate. African kings, however, are very numerous. Indeed, in almost every community, there is one man who is regarded as a king: his jurisdiction extending over a single hamlet, or a small tract of country, including within its limits several small hamlets.

As in European monarchical Governments, so among the native tribes of Africa, royalty and governmental authority are usually hereditary.—The legal successor of a departed king, however, cannot assume his royal station and authority without the concurrence of all the other kings of the tribe: and not unfrequently some other individual, not of the royal family, is appointed by the other kings, with the concurrence of the people over whom he is to preside, in conse-

quence of the minority of the rightful successor—though he may be a man of thirty years of age, or more—or of some other difficulty either imaginary or real. The kingly succession is not so scrupulously observed in Africa, as in Europe. And not unfrequently, like Bonaparte and Cromwell, some daring adventurer, sometimes of another and distant tribe, will usurp the power and authority rightly belonging to another, and set up a dominion or kingdom for himself, *ri et armis*, as in the case of the celebrated Boatswain, who rendered valuable assistance to the early settlers of Liberia.

In most cases, the title is the only thing of which African kings can boast. None of them are ever burdened with wealth. Indeed, most of them are miserably poor. I have seen half a dozen kings, and as many chiefs and headmen, at one time, sitting on the ground, as humble mendicants, in submissive patience, awaiting to receive a “dash” (present) of a few pounds of tobacco, from a gentleman in Liberia, at whose place of residence they had assembled.

In addition to those persons who are dignified with the honorable appellation of king, there are others of subordinate authority, who are generally called headmen. In each hamlet, however small, there is a headman, who has more or less control over all the other residents of the place, and who is responsible for their conduct. The principal mark of distinction between the kings, or the headmen, and the rest of the people, usually consists in the size of the garments which they respectively wear; those of the former generally being rather more extensive than those of the latter. Their style of

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living does not differ materially from that of any of their subjects, and their palaces cannot generally be distinguished from the residences of their untitled subordinates.

The natives about Liberia invariably reside in towns, or hamlets, few of which contain more than five hundred inhabitants, and most of them less than two hundred. The whole country, except in the immediate vicinity of these towns or hamlets, which are very numerous, presents a deep unbroken forest, the solemn silence of which is seldom disturbed, save by the footsteps and voices of travelers, and the noise of wild animals. The houses or huts in which they reside are generally rudely constructed of sticks, usually lined with strong bamboo mats, with which the dirt floors are also sometimes covered. They are always covered with thatch, and sometimes they are daubed outside with mud. Some of their huts are constructed with a little regard to taste and convenience, some are pretty substantially built, but most of them are filthy, smoky, ugly, disagreeable hovels, presenting indubitable evidence of extreme indolence and improvidence on the part of the inmates.

Their almost universal style of dress consists simply of a piece of cotton cloth, or a cotton handkerchief, fastened loosely about their loins; in addition to which, a kind of hat is sometimes (not generally) worn, composed of the fibres of some one of the numerous indigenous vegetable substances, or of a kind of grass. In addition to the ordinary "girdle about the loins," some of the natives, particularly the kings and headmen, wear a kind of robe, loosely thrown across one shoulder, and wrapped around the body. These robes are generally manufactured in the country, from the native cotton, which they spin by a very simple though tedious process, and weave into narrow strips, never more than six inches wide, by a process exhibiting a little ingenuity, but not less tedious than that of the spinning.

A great deal of their time is occupied in dancing and singing, and in a variety of nonsensical plays. These plays are frequently kept up, day and night, for several successive days, and sometimes for several weeks. I have frequently heard the sound of their rudely-constructed drums, and other instruments of music, at nearly all hours of both day and night. Some of their musical instruments are quite fanciful in appearance; but none that I ever saw exhibited much ingenuity

in their construction. They have various systems of gambling; and many of them are very expert in some of their games. It is not uncommon to see half a dozen, or more, strong, healthy natives, sitting on the ground, busily engaged in gambling, the amount at stake being a pipe full of tobacco.

Several of the tribes have national marks, by which the members of a particular tribe may be distinguished from those of any other tribe; in addition to which, the bodies of some are variously, and sometimes very fantastically, tattooed, particularly the breast, back, and arms. Their process of tattooing consists in making numerous small incisions in the skin, over which they rub a kind of paste, usually made of the ashes of a particular shrub, mixed with palm-oil, which leaves an indelible impression, somewhat darker than the contiguous surface.

Domestic slavery is very common among all the tribes to which I have alluded, and, I presume, among all the numerous tribes throughout the whole of Africa. So far as I was able to learn, the Kroomen and the Fishmen are the only tribes on that part of the western coast who do not enslave persons of their tribe, they never enslave each other, and they are seldom enslaved by others. They, however, frequently possess slaves of other tribes; and they are the most active "aiders and abettors" of the nefarious traffic on that part of the coast. They are generally employed in conducting the slaves from the marts on the coast to the slave ships; and from them principally is derived the information relative to the state of the trade.

In most cases the slaves owned by individuals of any tribe are of some other tribe. Those who are captured in the wars, and thus reduced to slavery, are generally sold to foreigners; while many of those who are purchased are kept for years by the individuals to whom they belong. It is not uncommon for one man to own several scores of slaves; and in some cases, among the wealthy sons of the forest, several hundreds of their fellow-beings submit in humble obedience to the authority of their princely master. It is not improbable, indeed, that at least five-sixths of the whole population of Africa are slaves. In visiting an African hamlet, however, a stranger would be at a loss to distinguish slaves from free men, or even from their masters. But, though they are of similar

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complexion, and though no prominent mark or badge of distinction can be seen by strangers, yet slaves are easily recognised by other members of the same community, and by members of other communities of the same tribes, and even by individuals of contiguous tribes. In many cases, however, they live as well as their masters do; and in some cases the state of bondage is apparently only nominal. But, like slaves in other countries, they are always deprived of certain civil and political immunities, which deprivation of course tends to degrade them in the estimation of their more highly favored neighbors. On some parts of the coast, however, as in the vicinity of the Gaboon river, and perhaps in many other parts of Africa, slaves are generally treated with the utmost severity, and are regarded by the free people with the utmost detestation. I have been informed that, among some tribes, they are held in so little estimation that the master may take their lives (which is not unfrequently done) for the most trifling offence, with perfect impunity, no legal process ever being instituted to punish the inhuman master in any way; and the only punishment which any other free man would have to endure, for a similar offence, would be the payment of the valuation of the slave to his master.

In many communities the number of slaves is much greater than that of the free persons; and it might be supposed that insurrections would be common. This, however, is not the case. It might also be supposed that slaves would frequently run away, inasmuch as the recognized mark of distinction—the difference in cutaneous hue—which exists in the United States between masters and slaves does not exist in Africa, and no other particular mark by which they could be known as slaves.—But they seldom resort to this expedient to obtain their freedom, knowing as they do that such a course (to use a familiar simile) would be a jump from the frying-pan into the fire, inasmuch as they would be doomed to slavery by the people among whom they had fled; and very probably their situation would be worse than before.

The ordinary valuation of an able-bodied slave is about thirty dollars, in goods; being from fifteen to twenty dollars in money. Young females generally sell for a few dollars more than males. Very often the wives, or some of them, of African "gentlemen," are their purchased slaves. And sometimes when they get tired of their "better halves," they do not hesitate to sell them to the highest bidder. The

custom of fathers selling their children, which is not, I think, so common as it is usually represented in written accounts of the horrors of the African slave trade, arises from the circumstance of the mothers of those children being slaves, and their offspring being so regarded, notwithstanding, as in some instances in other countries, father and master are terms of synonymous applicability.

In regard to the various superstitious notions of the ignorant and degraded aborigines of Africa, it would be difficult to measure their extent in any community, or to fathom the depth of degradation and misery thus handed down from one generation to another.

Among the numerous absurd opinions of a superstitious character which prevail in Western Africa, and which lead to the most foolish practices, the universal belief in *witchcraft* occupies the most prominent position. And, associated with this belief, and arising from it, are many of the most nonsensical practices of which the mind can conceive. So grossly absurd, indeed, are the incoherent views of the uneducated native African, in reference to the magical influences of witchcraft, that it is next to impossible to witness their foolish practices, resulting from this belief, even after making every allowance for their want of facilities of intellectual culture, without arriving at the conclusion that there is a natural obliquity of the African mind, unparalleled in all other countries. This prevailing and settled belief in the influences of witchcraft often leads to murderous practices, by which thousands of these poor, degraded beings are hurried into eternity. A most absurd superstition, common among them, is, that no person (except very old and worn-out people) dies, unless by the agency of some other person, who, according to their notions, "made witch" for the deceased individual; no matter what may be the circumstances attending his death—whether by protracted disease, or by accident. Suspicion generally rests on one individual, or more, who was known to have been in enmity with the deceased; or the family of the dead person are consulted, and they seldom fail to accuse some one of having "made witch" for their dead relative. It sometimes happens, however, that no particular person is accused; in which case it is incumbent on the "*grac-gre-man*," or doctor, (a very important and influential personage in every community,) to point out the culprit. The accused person is obliged to undergo the infallible ordeal of

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"drinking sassa-wood;" especially if the deceased had been a person of consequence. This drinking of sassa-wood, which is a universal test of witchcraft, consists in swallowing large quantities of an infusion of the bark of the sassa-wood tree—gulping it down until the distended stomach will not receive any more. If the person rejects from his stomach this poisonous infusion, and lives, his innocence is established; but if he retains it, and consequently dies, his cruel tormentors are satisfied of his guilt.

Any person is liable to be accused of witchcraft, or of having caused the death of a deceased person; but generally some old person is fixed on—one whom they wish to get out of the way; or some person with whom the relatives of the deceased are at variance, and on whom they wish to take revenge, for some imaginary or real injury. This is a very common way of being revenged. Sometimes the individual who dies points out, before death, the person who is accused; and, in some cases, it is for some injury done many years before, by the accused person himself, or by one of the same family, who may already have died. The natives of Africa generally are very revengeful. They harbor such feelings for a long time; nor are they very particular as to the individual on whom they take revenge: if he or she belongs to the same family, it is enough. Although the drinking of sassa-wood is professedly regarded as a test of witchcraft, yet perhaps, in most cases, the death of the unfortunate individual who falls a victim to this murderous practice is previously concerted; and in those cases in which the death of the accused person is not desired by the principal operators in this tragical ordeal, the infusion is made so weak as not to produce death. In some cases the victim is unceremoniously beat to death, after having swallowed the liquid. So that, in some cases, the result of this operation of drinking sassa-wood is premeditated. And, though a considerable number recover, after having submitted to this absurd ordeal, yet thousands, perhaps millions, have been immolated on this altar of African superstition.

Most of the natives carry something about them, which they call "*gree-gree*," the object of which is to protect them from the various ills to which "flesh is heir." Each of these *gree-grees* is carried for some specific purpose—to protect them from some particular danger. They are generally suspended around their necks, and are made of various substances, in all

imaginable shapes. They all are consecrated by the *gree-gree* man, or doctor. Some are made of the end of a ram's horn, filled with a mysterious charm by the *gree-gree* man; others are more complex in their workmanship, and of course more various in their potency. Some persons are literally loaded with these foolish amulets. They have gun *gree-grees*, water, fire, poison, war, and I know not how many other kinds, to protect them from different kinds of danger. And it is very difficult to induce any of them to sell any of these foolish appendages.

The prevailing form of worship among the aborigines in the vicinity of Liberia (if indeed, it can be said that they really worship anything,) is what may be emphatically called *Devil Worship*—a kind of superstitious reverence and dread of his Satanic Majesty—which consists not in public acts of solemn worship, but in undefined conceptions of the power and agency of the Devil, in all their affairs; and in various nonsensical methods to court his favor or to avoid his displeasure.

In the vicinity of many of the towns, a small place is set apart in the dense forest, which is called the "*devil-bush*." At a certain age, or sometime during boyhood or adolescence, the male youths are admitted formally into the privileges and duties of manhood, by being brought into the vicinity of the *devil-bush*, and receiving certain mysterious instructions from the "*devil-man*," who remains concealed from view. Previous to this important period in the life of the young neophyte, he is not permitted to take any part in the affairs of state, or even to know anything of the judicial proceedings—a prescription which extends not only to the young, but to all who have not been initiated into the wonderful mysteries of this chartered university. The mysterious, mighty *devil-man* is none other than one of their own people, who, at certain periods, emerges from his temporary concealment, dressed in the most fantastical manner, and presenting a most frightful appearance. While he is entering the town, in order to engage in the "*devil-plays*," he blows a huge horn; at the sound of which the women and children are obliged to fly for their lives. The principal object of the ceremonies of the "*devil-bush*" seems to be to keep the women under subjection. In Africa, as well as in every other uncivilized country, women are made "chewers of wood and drawers of water;" they are compelled to perform a great part of the labor necessary to the

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subsistence of their lordly spouses: they sow the rice, plant the cassadas, and attend to the principal duties of husbandry; and, in all things, they are obliged to yield submissively to the will of the men. They are not permitted to be present, or even to be within sight or hearing, under penalty of death, during the ceremonies of the "devil-play;" nor are they allowed, at any time, under any circumstances, to enter or to come near the place of residence of the vicergerent of the arch-deceiver. They are kept profoundly ignorant of all these proceedings, and of everything else which would tend to place them on an equality with their tyrannical rulers—the men.

A place similar to the devil-bush is set apart in the vicinity of most of the towns, as a seminary for young females. This is called the "gree-gree bush." A small spot of ground is cleared, in the midst of a dense piece of forest; a few huts are erected on this cleared spot; and in this sacred retreat, consecrated to female chastity, the young and innocent damsels are placed, and kept under the direction and instructions of an old woman, whose business is to instruct them in all the duties pertaining to their condition, as maidens, and to the connubial state. Those girls who are placed in this female seminary are generally, perhaps always, betrothed, or rather sold, by their parents, before their entrance—sometimes, indeed, from their infancy. And here they are generally kept until the time of celebration of the nuptials with their previously-affianced lords. Males are never permitted to enter the abode of these innocent creatures, under any circumstances whatever—not even their fathers or brothers. Nor are the girls allowed to leave their allotted place, except when accompanied by their aged preceptress. And even on occasions when they are brought out of their place of confinement, they are not permitted to say any thing to any individual of the other sex.

The natives in the vicinity of Liberia universally believe in the existence of a Supreme Being; but they never offer any kind of religious worship to him; and their conceptions of his character are exceedingly grovelling and undefined. They also believe in the existence of a principle within the body, which must survive its dissolution; but they have no definite

ideas respecting the future state of existence. Indeed, in all that relates to the nature of the human soul, and to its future destiny, their views are exceedingly indefinite, and they abound in contradictions and absurdities. To reduce the discordant elements of the native African's creed to anything like the unity and consistency of a system, would require a heavy draught on the imagination of the compiler.

In reference to the moral and intellectual condition of the native tribes in the vicinity of Liberia, and, I may add, throughout the greater part of Western and Southern Africa, a picture sad and gloomy meets the eye of the observer, and causes the Christian philanthropist to mourn over the moral desolation of these degraded beings. For centuries they have been utterly destitute of the restraints of morality, as well as of the benign influences of Christianity; and from one depth of degradation to a deeper still, they have been sinking, until, among many of the tribes, the last vestiges of humanity almost seem to be merging into an allied proximity with the wild beasts of the forest.

In energy and activity of mind, they are inferior to most other portions or classes of the human race. In the language of one who well understands the African character: "A few local associations; a limited number of acquaintances among their own people, (all equally ignorant,) some knowledge of raising the bare necessities of life; a few traditionary stories, handed down from father to son, and rehearsed in their social groups, as pastime, and a superficial knowledge of the superstitions of their forefathers, comprise about the sum total of their stores of knowledge. They saunter through life, conscious that they shall exist hereafter, but strangely indifferent as to the nature or conditions of that existence." And, in reference to the mental imbecility and the indifference to intellectual improvement among these degraded sons and daughters of Ham, I may add, in the language of the same careful and experienced observer, (Rev. J. L. Wilson,) "In whatever point of light we contemplate the African mind, it presents little else than an inextricable maze of ignorance, credulity, and superstition, from which it can never be disengaged except by the life-giving and light-imparting influences of Christianity."













